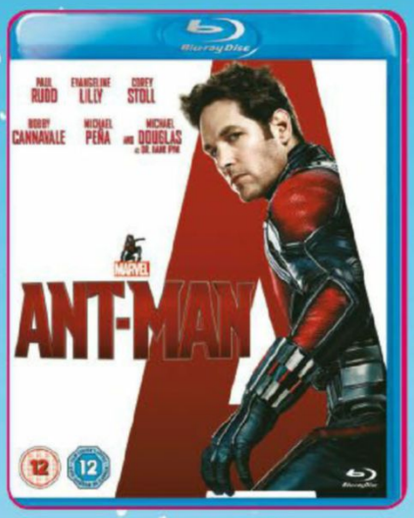
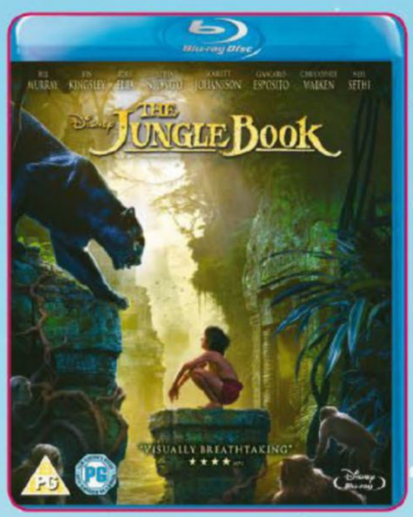

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A STAR WARS STORY
"IT'S NOT DIET STAR WARS... IT'S FULL-ON"
GARETH EDWARDS
Future

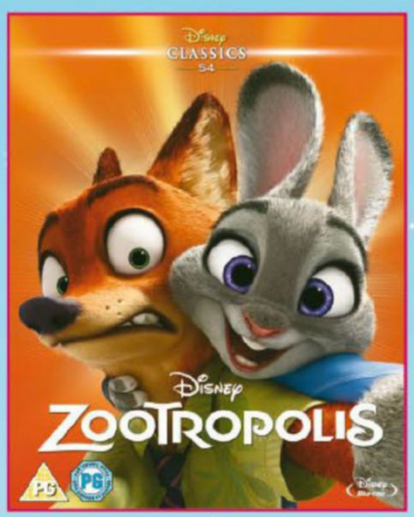
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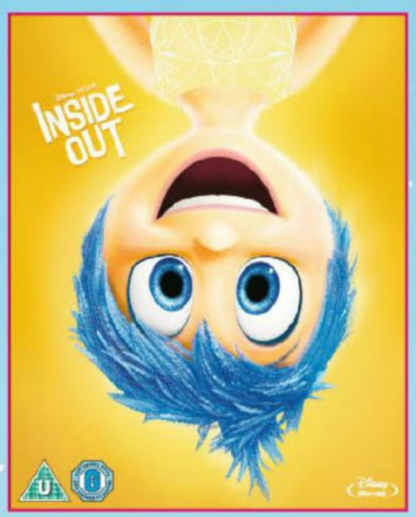












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WELCOME TO TOTAL FILM

THE SMARTER MOVIE MAGAZINE



It's here! Our big, shiny, jam-packed *Rogue One* behemoth of an issue. And it's been a labour of love and a brain tease to get it done – chasing filmmakers and casts all over the globe over several months, re-watching the entire franchise and delving into the most obscure areas of *SW* trivia (most of us didn't realise that Chewie doesn't actually get a medal at the end of *A New Hope*. Discrimination!) From one beloved film to another; check out our feature on the unbelievably brilliant *La La Land* (gongs incoming) and enjoy our chat with the unassuming but brilliant Michelle Williams. We also went on set of *A Monster Calls*, got punch drunk with *Bleed For This* and emotional with *Lion*. Plus all those properly trustworthy reviews of the latest releases and a shortcut to planning the Christmas shopping with our bumper pressie guide (Dear Santa, I'd like the *Blade Runner* whisky glasses, please!)... I mean, truly, this issue is the gift that keeps on giving!

ENJOY THE ISSUE!



Jane Crowther, Editor-in-Chief

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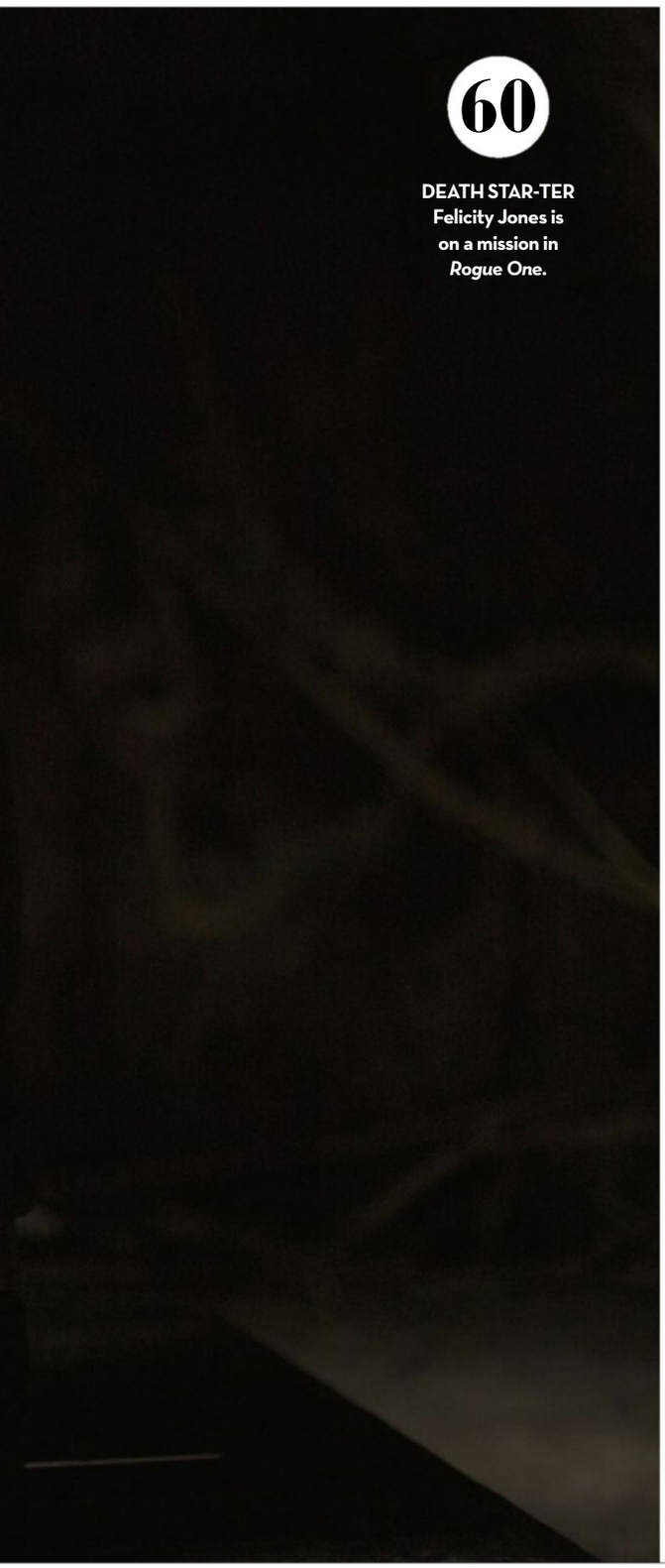
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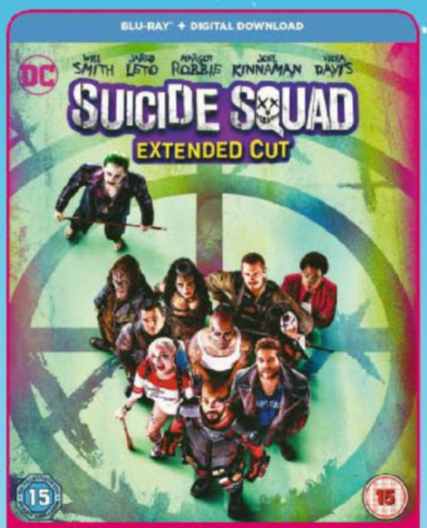
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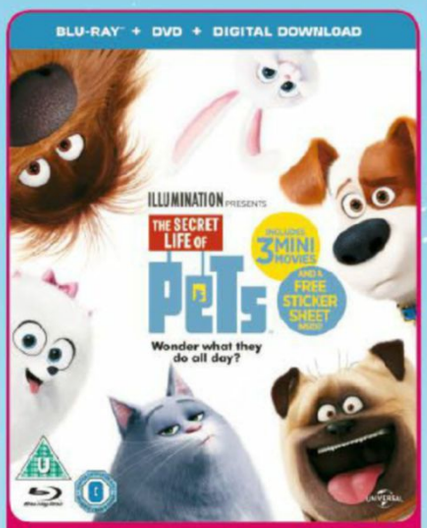
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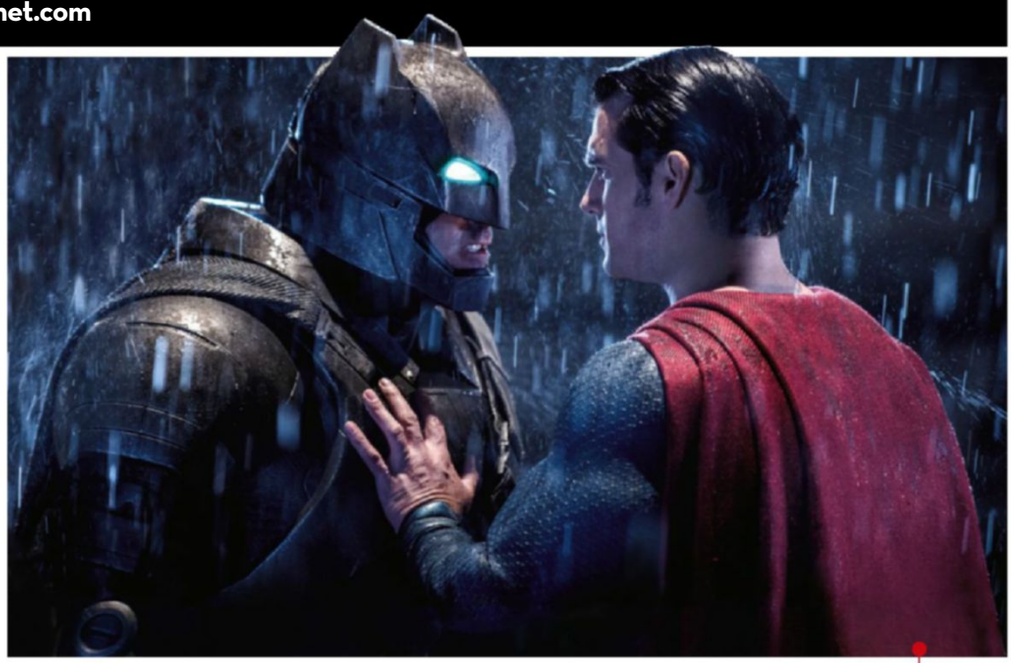
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Dialogue

Mail, rants, theories etc.



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TOTAL FILM WINGMAN

TF'S CINEMATIC AGONY UNCLE HAS YOUR BACK.

DEAR WINGMAN

Is anyone else as sick as I am about studios releasing collector's editions of their films not long after the original versions? Most so-called extended editions add little or nothing to the film. Why not just work on making a decent film the first time round?! Oh I forgot, it's all about rinsing us dry of all our pennies!!

SADIA HUSSAIN, SLOUGH

WINGMAN SAYS...

Double-dipping has become something of the norm; in fact 'double-figures-dipping' would probably be more accurate in some cases. That said, some extended editions just wouldn't work in cinemas; it certainly saves some wear on the bum to doze on the sofa watching Cate Blanchett dish out gifts to the Fellowship like a slow-motion Santa Claus. Have a question for the Wingster? Email me!

STAR LETTER

★ 2016 may have served up some duffers, what with highly anticipated films like *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice* and *Suicide Squad* proving to be huge disappointments. But I can't be the only one who still thinks 2006 was perhaps the worst year for film this side of the millennium? With the exception of a handful of genuine good 'uns, I always associate the year with *Snakes On A Plane*, which surely isn't a good sign.

LUCY BARTLETT, GLENFIELD



It's hardly a better one that 2006's top earner was *Pirates Of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*, a film best remembered for Bill Nighy's octopus beard and best forgotten for its dice 'game' that felt like your worst unending-Monopoly-session nightmare.

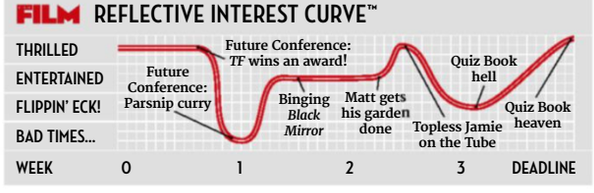
But '06 did give us *Casino Royale*, *The Departed*, *Pan's Labyrinth*... Email us your worst year for movies – and your best, so that we don't all start bonfiring our Blu-rays. Lucy and everyone with a letter printed here will receive a copy of *Jason Bourne*, out 21 November on Digital HD and available 28 November on Blu-ray, DVD, 4K Ultra HD and on demand via Universal Pictures (UK). Didn't send an address? Email it!

COMING SPOON

This letter is borne of frustration with today's trailers, most recently the one for *Arrival*. My proposal is that

STEADY ON, BRUCE *Batman V Superman:* bad, but not as bad as *Snakes On A Plane.*

FILM REFLECTIVE INTEREST CURVE™





But can Cap bridge the gap between the superhero lovers and haters?

trailers should carry some form of spoiler alert or classification. I suggest a spoon symbol (bear with me) that represents how much spoon feeding the audience is about to receive. One 'spoon' represents a trailer that gives only an impression of the movie, intended to capture the imagination/excite the anticipation (e.g. *The Force Awakens*). Five 'spoons', meanwhile is a trailer showing the whole what/where/when/who and why – basically the storyline with almost all loose ends tied up (e.g. *Arrival*). Let's stir up the trailer pot. That said, I'm still going to see *Arrival*. Looks good.
DAW, VIA EMAIL

Yes – do see *Arrival*; you'll be blown away when the spaceships turn out to be giant Haribo piñatas, burying landmarks under a deadly hail of tiny fried eggs… whoops! Are we down with the spoon symbol? Or should it be something more movie-ish, like a ghost Bruce Willis? Chimps swinging on the Statue Of Liberty? Gwyneth Paltrow via Parcelforce?

SUPERHERO TO ZERO

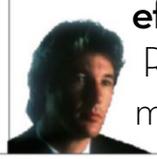
It goes without saying at this stage of the game that Marvel are world-class storytellers. However they deserve significant praise for taking a chance on *Doctor Strange*. Let's be honest – on paper it sounded hokey as hell! But lo and behold they pulled it off once again! Witty one-liners, funny, spectacular special effects and great performances made this not only one of the better origin stories told in a while but one of the best superhero movies out there. Definitely looking forward to the sequel!
MATTHEW, MERTHYR TYDFIL

Seriously, how can *Captain America: Civil War* still be at the top of your leaderboard for best film of the year? Are you guys on some kind of retainer from Marvel or what? Despite hating the first two *Captain America* films, I watched *Civil War* as I assumed from your high ranking and the fact that you gave the DVD release a full five stars that I was missing out. But nope. Pretty much the same problem as almost

OFFICE SPACED

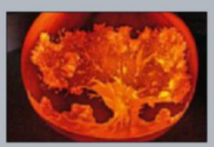
Chatter 'gems' overheard in the Total Film office this month…

* "It looks like a unicorn threw up on the page."
* **"We've lost half a day because of an effing swan."** * "I had a dream where Richard Gere wanted to sleep with me, and I was happy about it."



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PUMPKIN OF THE MONTH
http://bit.ly/2eakFwq
How to mark both *Halloween* AND *Game Of Thrones* Season 6 on home-ent? With a weirwood tree pumpkin! Unlit, merely OK. Lit, we were beaming like George R.R. Martin picking up a royalties cheque.



OASIS PIZZA OF THE MONTH
http://bit.ly/2f9xcSY
We were definitely maybe gorging ourselves all lunch hour long when this delish pizza (plus guitar cutter) arrived courtesy of ace Oasis doc *Supersonic*.



DONALD GLOVER AS LANDO: DISCUSS…
https://bit.ly/2f9wJQQ
Raved @Wtrueman: "This has the potential to be flippin' amazing!" Meanwhile, @Metalmalc weighed in with a *Community* homage: "Han and Lando in the mooorrrnnningg."



LOGAN TRAILER: YOUR THOUGHTS
https://bit.ly/2fe706K
"Looks like the makers have seen *Blood Father* one too many times and thought – if it worked for Gibson…" @EveofCleves; "Cool trailer!" @DavidStrutt; "Most depressing *X-Men* movie yet." @Gr33nRobot



BOOK STASH OF THE MONTH
https://bit.ly/2eapoyh
To celebrate the release of *The Cell* on DVD, we received a bumper stash of Stephen King books. Still trying to decide whether to keep them for ourselves or make it a merry King-mas for all our friends and family.



OBI-WAN MOVIE, ANYONE?
https://bit.ly/2fabVJh
"Two parts? *Star Wars: Obi* and *Star Wars: Wan*?" @GillyGrist; "He sat hiding in the desert for 30 years – where's the story in that?" @eddy187; "If this involves the final stand of Darth Maul, I'm all in!" @mdbrown10



INFERNO CUPCAKES OF THE MONTH
https://bit.ly/2fa8EcV
Friday afternoon and energy levels are low – until these Dan Brown-themed cupcakes rock up, propelling us on a sugar high into (and indeed through) the weekend.

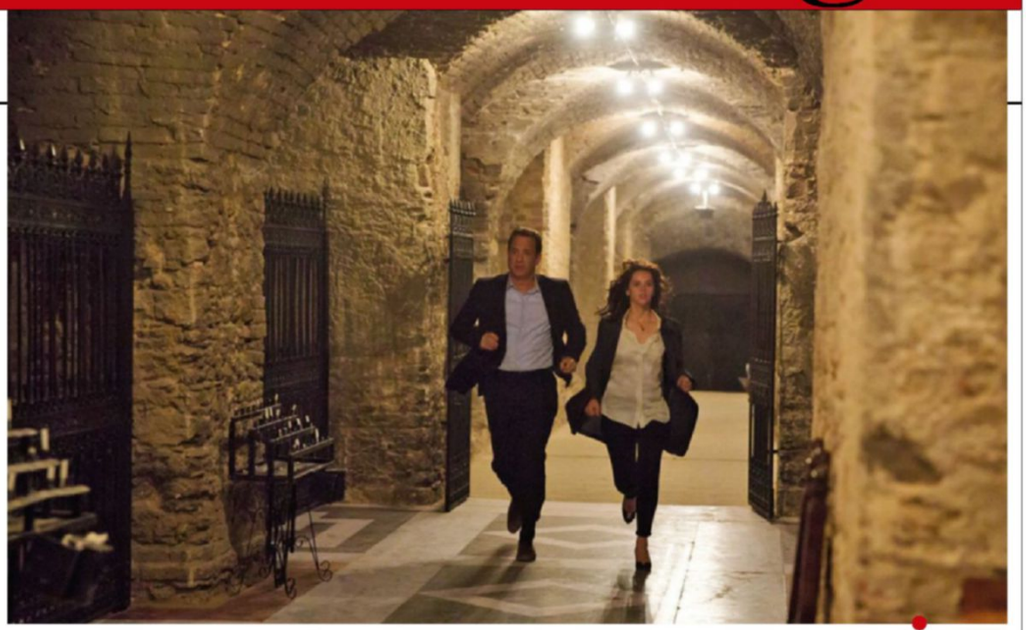


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RUN FORREST RUN
Ron Howard's Langdon films: a tad formulaic?

every other superhero film: daft plot and contrived characterisation. It's time we all just admitted that unless you're going to be like Tim Burton and embrace the camper, theatrical aspects of having a guy running around in latex, superheroes just don't really work outside of comic books. When I got to the end of *Civil War* the only thing I could think was: Is that it? I had the same problem last year with *Mad Max: Fury Road* – couldn't for the life of me see what everyone was raving about. I've nothing against a mindless blockbuster, but come on. Neither film deserved such high praise.
TIM JEFFREYS, VIA EMAIL

Whoa – if Kevin Feige read those letters, he'd go from feeling like Thor getting his hammer back to feeling like Loki after a sound Hulk-ing. As for the leaderboard, tune in next month as we reveal our final 2016 champion. Will *Cap* cling on to the top spot? Or could there be an upset? You never know when a *Greasy Strangler* might strike… (though it's probably not too hard to spot an old man wearing nothing but chip fat).

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RON TURN

Please do me a favour and pass on these story details for my next novel to Ron Howard. It's called *Bedknobs And Broomsticks* and features my brilliant symbologist Robert Langdon. It has the usual mind-blowing *Antique Roadshow* investigation, with a bit of *Holiday Puzzler* mag thrown in, mystical mumbo-jumbo, startling revelations and even more preposterous deductions; this time the art masterpiece is Tracey Emin's *My Bed* and it will also encompass the discovery of the actual broom handle Delilah used to sweep up Samson's hair clippings! Plus the twist this time is Tom H will search for clues with a brown paper bag on his head. Wowee! Ron will love it.
DAN BROWNIE, VIA EMAIL

As unofficial representatives for Mr. Howard, we would like to thank you for your idea and politely ask you to flush it down the Louvre (even if it does sound more fun than *Inferno*).

HEAVEN '17

I was wondering if you could include a prediction of the best (or worst) 10 films of 2017 in your next issue. *La La Land*? *Star Wars Episode VIII*? *Blade Runner 2049*? *Smurfs: The Lost Village*? The new mag's great by the way!
GEORGE AKERMAN, VIA EMAIL

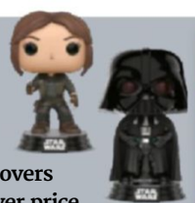
Thank you! You had us at *La La Land*; became dead to us at *Smurfs*. We'll be previewing 2017 up the wazoo in our next issue, out 22 December (yes, another plug – Mum wants a new flatscreen for Christmas).

SPOILT FOR VOICE

I've become somewhat obsessed recently by actors with distinctive voices. All too often we focus on how handsome or how sexy an actor is, but a powerful vocal performance, whether in animation or live action, can be wonderfully evocative. James Earl Jones is one of the obvious choices for his deep, rumbling rich tones. In the same category we have Brian Blessed. Also, who could not love the delightful voices of British acting pals Sir Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen? Other contenders for the list might be: Benedict Cumberbatch, William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy, Scarlett Johansson, Emma Stone… What do you think? Who would readers list as their favourite vocal talents?
KEVIN STANLEY, RUSKINGTON

You heard the man, readers – speak now or etc. etc. We give our blessing (or indeed, Blessed) to Kevin's choices, plus Alan Rickman, Morgan Freeman, Kathleen Turner and Groot.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

* A horror with 23 James McAvoys p17
* Hollywood's hottest couple in space p20
* This winter's weirdest blockbuster p28
* Will Smith deals with Death p36

EDITED BY JORDAN FARLEY



EXCLUSIVE

BRAVE NEW WORLD

BILLY LYNN'S LONG HALFTIME WALK | Could Ang Lee's boundary-smashing Iraq war drama usher in the future of cinema?

Having embraced 3D to eye-popping effect on *Life Of Pi*, picking up a Best Director Oscar in the process, Ang Lee is returning to the vanguard of filmmaking technology with war drama *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*. As well as shooting in native 3D (old news), and at 4K resolution (yawn), the literary adaptation was filmed at a silky smooth *120* frames per second (fps) – far framier than *The Hobbit*'s 48fps and double what the *Avatar* sequels are aiming for. Have that, Cameron.

Reactions after initial screenings at the New York Film Festival in October were mixed, ranging from "revolutionary" to "a fucking crime against cinema", and even Lee admits it won't sit well with everyone. Not yet, at least. "To me it's a gradual thing," Lee says. "When you have something so new, you don't know how people are going to take it." The reason for such a grand departure from "flat" 24fps filmmaking? Unprecedented levels of immersion and clarity, even in a 'grounded' drama such as *Billy Lynn's*. But if *The Hobbit*'s high frame rate presentation looked like a Benny Hill sketch to you, that wasn't the tech's fault according to Lee.

"Technology cannot [*take away from the storytelling*]. If that happens, that means you are not good enough for that technology," the director bluntly asserts. "Technology is how we use it. It's what you make of it." One of the

NEW RECRUIT
Londoner Joe Alwyn, making his screen debut, stars as the titular Billy Lynn.

key ways Lee is making the most of his groundbreaking new tools is by having his cast address the camera directly, in a fourth-wall flaunting fashion, when talking to main character Billy. "It's more personal. I try to mimic life. In a flat screen, I found that characters look as if they are looking at you as an audience and not you as the person."

Whether his new toys usher in a sea change for cinema, or are simply a smell-o-vision-style drop in the ocean, Lee has never been a director to neglect story, and he's working from proven material with *Billy Lynn's*, in the shape of Ben Fountain's award-winning 2012 novel. Like the book, the film follows a squad of Army Specialists in Iraq, who return to US soil as heroes after a video showing their daring endeavours in the heat of battle goes viral. As part of their 'victory tour', Billy and his comrades are deployed to the halftime show at an American football game on Thanksgiving. Set over a single day, the film cuts between the show, the battle in Iraq and Billy's history, while dealing with friendship, the monetisation of combat and the unanticipated costs of war.

The film's complex structure serves an important purpose, with moments in the present mirroring events in Billy's flashbacks (fireworks echo the deafening din of gunfire, for example). And it doesn't just deal with the traditional fallout from war, but tackles the idea of unwelcome fame and the complications that arise when it's associated with taking a life. "This is an extreme because they are all on stage," says Lee. "But these things happen, you have seen this extravagant show and that is how people pay their tribute or their respect. It doesn't come from a bad place. But just imagine how the soldier would feel in the midst of that, they would feel like monkeys."

Despite dealing with experimental technology, the film's biggest hurdle was one filmmakers have wrestled with since the dawn of cinema – finding the right man. Lee discovered his Billy in Royal Central School Of Speech & Drama graduate Joe Alwyn – a complete unknown. "It's his first job and he does especially what needs to be done," Lee says of Alwyn, who hadn't even graduated when he was cast. "I had to take a leap of faith." Meanwhile, the wildly eclectic supporting cast is filled with familiar faces, including Steve Martin as Dallas Cowboys owner Norm Oglesby, Chris Tucker as the exec trying to secure the movie rights for the soldiers' story, Kristen Stewart as Billy's disapproving sister, Garrett Hedlund as a fellow squaddie and Vin Diesel as the wisdom-dispensing Sergeant Shroom. The squad, in particular, formed a close bond. "All the actors trained together and lived together," Lee explains. "There was one time that they were in a bar and somebody caused trouble, a bouncer, and they all turned around like they were going to fight. And there you go. Their reaction is to protect their own."

Another radical, albeit low-tech, choice that affected the film's cast: not a single actor wears make-up on camera. "When I invited [*the actors*] to be in the movie, I told them we're trying something new and there is no make-up and if they were OK with it," Lee says. With a $40 million budget, it's safe to assume penny pinching wasn't part of his motive. "They knew that when they engaged in my movie, they just had to try it. I think that actors welcome that. They want to be exposed to vulnerability and to drama and to examine humanity."

> 'JUST IMAGINE HOW THE SOLDIER WOULD FEEL... THEY WOULD FEEL LIKE MONKEYS'

Examining humanity has been at the core of Lee's career, and while his latest tech revolution may never catch on, there's little doubt that Lee marches to the beat of his own drum. "They used to do movies in black and white, and they found colour distracting. Sound was distracting. I think [*120fps*] is the same thing," Lee confidently states. "I am the first guy to do something with it and then when I do it, I don't know how people will take it. So there is no reference to speak of. So it's really that question, it's not like, is this good or is this bad? You cannot say that." ***JF***

ETA | 6 JANUARY / BILLY LYNN'S LONG HALFTIME WALK OPENS IN THE NEW YEAR.



RIGHT
The film is split between a Thanksgiving Day celebration event and flashbacks.

BELOW LEFT
Billy Lynn on tour in Iraq alongside fellow soldier Sergeant Shroom (Vin Diesel).

BELOW RIGHT
(top) Director Ang Lee on set, (right) Kristen Stewart as Billy's sister and (bottom) Billy returning home.













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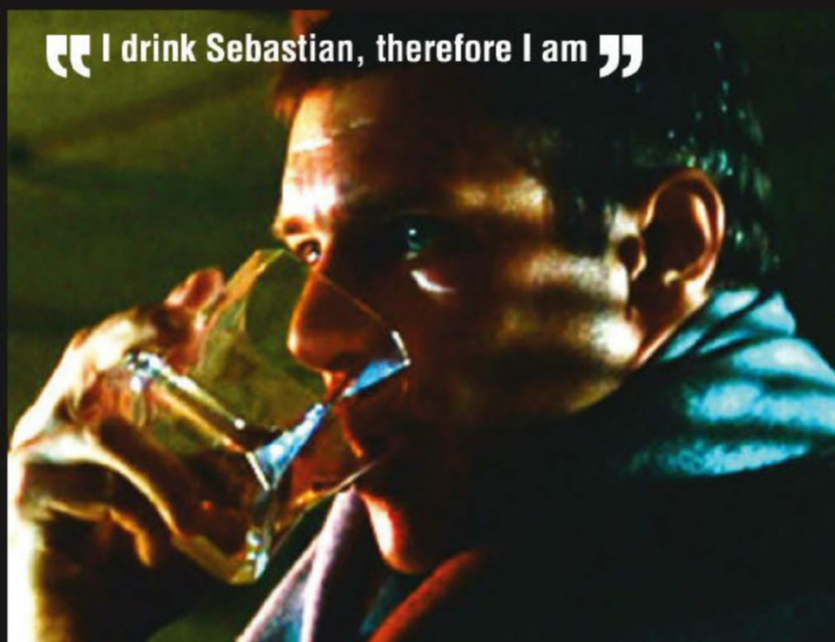
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EXCLUSIVE

MULTIPLE CHOICE

SPLIT | M. Night Shyamalan casts James McAvoy as a kidnapper with 23 personalities...

I've gotten darker…" grins M. Night Shyamalan when *Teasers* meets him to discuss his new low-budget thriller. "I feel like, making smaller movies, I'm allowed to push the boundaries." It's September 2016, and it's only a few days since *Split* premiered to strong reviews at Austin's Fantastic Fest. Following horror *The Visit*, *Split* feels like the second step in Shyamalan's comeback story after a string of critically savaged pictures.

The film stars James McAvoy as 'Kevin'. When he kidnaps three teenage girls and locks them in his basement, it soon becomes clear that there's more to Kevin than meets the eye, as the young women are gradually introduced to his other personalities, from young Hedwig to haughty Patricia. Kevin has dissociative identity disorder (previously called multiple personality disorder), and the 23 players in his head collude to keep the girls captive ahead of the imminent arrival of 'the Beast'.

The part requires a tour-de-force performance from McAvoy, who Shyamalan spotted at a party sporting his *X-Men: Apocalypse* buzzcut, as there are no major physical changes for any of the personalities McAvoy inhabits. "When I saw James is when I started to think of it more and more like that," recalls Shyamalan. "Just an internal performance, and a blank slate. When I saw him with his buzzed hair, it all went 'click' to me."

"I think your instinct guides you, to begin with," says McAvoy of portraying so many different characters.



CHANGING MINDS
McAvoy puts his acting chops to the test, switching personalities without any major physical changes or make-up.

"Sometimes you come up with a pretty much fully formed character, just instinctually. But then other characters don't come to you so easily."

Shyamalan calls *Split*'s lean, mean shoot the toughest of his career. "It was an ambitious movie for a low budget," he admits. "Super-ambitious, because it certainly didn't feel like it was low budget when it was done. You have a lot of characters. It's a very complicated screenplay structure." It certainly kept McAvoy busy. "Because usually, you get to do the really good stuff as an actor every third day or fourth day, if you're playing the lead," the Brit actor smiles. "This one, it was like, 'OK, I'm doing this character's good stuff this minute, then two hours later, I'm doing that character's good stuff.' It was really interesting for me to get to do that."

Shyamalan describes dissociative identity disorder as "a subject I've always been interested in", and *Split* also allows him to toy with genre and push those aforementioned boundaries; he cites indie movies and world cinema as influences, giving special mention to *Dogtooth* and *Hidden (Caché)*. "You can kind of feel it if you watch *Split*," he concludes. "It's a mainstream subject done through independent eyes." ***MM***

ETA | 20 JANUARY / SPLIT OPENS IN 2017.



HOT RIGHT NOW

MAHERSHALA ALI

FINALLY GETTING THE ROLES HE DESERVES.

I've been acting for 20 years and really just starving for parts," says Mahershala Ali, who's appeared in TV shows such as *The 4400*, *Treme* and *House Of Cards*, plus movies such as *The Curious Case Of Benjamin Button* and *The Place Beyond The Pines*, without ever graduating from being a face you recognise to a recognisable face.

Then he starred as the villainous Cornell 'Cottonmouth' Stokes in Netflix series *Luke Cage*, plus wowed film festival crowds in Toronto and London with acclaimed drama *Moonlight* (out next year). "I'm now having a more fulfilling experience as an actor," he smiles, smoothing his tightly clipped 'tache and then his double-denim outfit. "Acting has been the only thing I've ever done and I finally feel I'm in the place I want to be."

Pointing out that *Luke Cage*, and superheroes in general, is "a very heightened genre", Ali stresses that *Moonlight* is a little more grounded. He plays a drug dealer who takes the protagonist, then a child, under his wing in the early stages of the movie, and drew on his own past to avoid settling for movie clichés.

"There was this guy who dated my aunt when I was nine years old," he recalls. "A substitute teacher. Humble, kind, sweet. He got arrested for being a drug dealer and went away to prison for 10 years."

The 42-year-old actor also has *Hidden Figures* in the can ("It explores the contribution of three African-American women to the Space Race in the late '50s, early '60s; my character is a love interest, but the storyline is a beautiful one") and is currently shooting Robert Rodriguez' sci-fi action-romance *Alita: Battle Angel*. "I can't say much but I will say he is the lead villain," he grins. "They provide context for where he comes from, so he's very human, understandable. It's really gratifying." ***JG/MM***

ETA | 2017 / MOONLIGHT OPENS NEXT YEAR. HIDDEN FIGURES OPENS 24 FEBRUARY.

ERIK TANNER / CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES



ACTION! Eddie Redmayne voices Stone Age footballer Dug.

FIRST LOOK

ROCK STARS

EARLY MAN | Nick Park is back behind the clay for Aardman's prehistoric sports-com.

It's more than a decade since stop-motion maestro Nick Park last got his hands dirty, on 2005's *Wallace & Gromit: The Curse Of The Were-Rabbit*, but now he's officially returned to the director's chair for *Early Man*. The Stone Age animation recently kicked off production at Aardman's home base in Bristol, where it will go before cameras one painstaking frame at a time ahead of its UK release on 26 January 2018.

Set at the scientifically dubious dawn of time, when prehistoric creatures and woolly mammoths roam the Earth alongside cave-dwelling humans, it stars Eddie Redmayne as main man Dug, who gets into all manner of scrapes with his porcine sidekick Hognob. "Not only is Eddie a joy to work with, his versatility and boundless energy have really helped to bring my new character to life," Park says. "He embodies the cheeky charm, fun and plucky wit of Dug and I'm sure he'll get along brilliantly with Dug's sidekick Hognob."

Together, the plucky pair unite their tribe against rivals the Bronze Age, led by Tom Hiddleston's "ridiculously pompous" Lord Nooth, in order to compete in the world's first game of football. "This is a very ambitious project, with a lot more characters than *Shaun* [The Sheep]," StudioCanal chief executive Olivier Courson told *Deadline*. But the footie-averse have nothing to fear, according to Courson. "The film is not about football, but it is an important component."

Plot details are otherwise thin on the ground, but with a $50 million budget, *Early Man* is one of Aardman's most ambitious stop-motion projects to date, and the second StudioCanal-financed family project to go into production in recent weeks, with *Paddington 2* currently filming in and around London. "I'm very excited to be making this film with such great partners – StudioCanal and BFI," says Park. "And with the support of the incredible team at Aardman, bringing this inept bunch of cavemen to life is going to be a hilarious adventure."

Aardman's most recent film, *Shaun The Sheep*, was a smash hit, making more than $100 million on a $25 million investment. *Shaun* scribe Mark Burton is back on writing duties for *Early Man* alongside *Chicken Run*'s John O'Farrell. And with Oscar-winning mastermind Nick Park back in the fold, *Early Man* promises plenty of Jurassic larks. ***JF***

'REDMAYNE EMBODIES THE CHEEKY CHARM AND WIT OF DUG' NICK PARK

ETA | 26 JANUARY 2018 / EARLY MAN OPENS NEXT WINTER.

TOTAL FILM

TOP 10

TF's ever-evolving 2016 movie league table...

01 CAPTAIN AMERICA: CIVIL WAR



02 ARRIVAL NEW

Descending on our top 10 like a giant floaty space egg, Denis Villeneuve's smart, soulful sci-fi is one of the year's highlights.



03 AMERICAN HONEY

It's been months since we saw Andrea Arnold's exhilarating movie at Cannes, and there still isn't a day when Shia LaBeouf dancing to Rihanna doesn't cross our minds.

04 ROOM

05 CREED

06 SON OF SAUL



07 SPOTLIGHT

Easy to forget that Tom McCarthy's tale of investigative journalism came out in 2016, but it's a testament to its power that it's stuck with us.

08 DEADPOOL

09 SING STREET

10 MIDNIGHT SPECIAL



‘IT’S A VERY INTIMATE MOVIE TAKING PLACE ON THIS EPIC SCALE’
MORTEN TYLDUM

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FIRST LOOK

STAR DATE

PASSENGERS | Jennifer Lawrence and Chris Pratt play interstellar lovers in Morten Tyldum's space-based romance.

Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall. Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. Chris Pratt and Jennifer Lawrence? Classic Hollywood couplings may have fallen out of fashion in recent years, but with *Passengers* and *La La Land* releasing weeks apart, the star-driven romance is back on the cards. Gosling and Stone are a proven pairing, of course, but screen duos don't get more charismatic than Hollywood's highest-paid actress and its fastest rising actor.

"If you're doing a love story the big thing as a director that you always wonder about is, will these actors have chemistry?" director Morten Tyldum asks. The answer was a complete no-brainer. "They just exploded on screen. They're so amazing together, and you fall in love with them."

Written by Jon Spaihts (*Doctor Strange*, *Prometheus*), *Passengers* spent the best part of a decade in development hell. It passed through the hands of Keanu Reeves and Reese Witherspoon at the Weinstein Company, before getting the green light at Sony in mid-2015 after months of behind-the-scenes wrangling over budget (said to be in the $120m-$150m range) and Lawrence's staggering $20m-plus payday – $8m more than co-star Pratt. Tyldum directed Alan Turing biopic *The Imitation Game* to Oscar-nominated acclaim, but *Passengers*' blend of romance and mega-budget sci-fi thrills marks a major departure for the Norwegian filmmaker.

SLEEPLESS IN SPACE

Set aboard the starship Avalon, Lawrence and Pratt play Aurora and Jim, who bought tickets to a new human colony. But three decades into their 120-year trip, Aurora and Jim wake up when their sleep chambers malfunction. With no way to go back under, a relationship blossoms, but as the trailer hints, there's a reason they're awake early.

"We have to deal with one another and the reality of living on a ship that's been designed to keep people from figuring out [*its*] intricacies," Pratt explains. "Ultimately, we don't know whether or not we're alone." They're not alone on the cast list at least, with Laurence Fishburne and Andy Garcia popping up in flashbacks, while Michael Sheen features as a robotic bartender named Arthur, who bears a striking resemblance to *The Shining*'s spectral drink-dispenser Lloyd. Is it a subtle hint at trouble to come?

"It's a very intimate movie while taking place on this epic scale," Tyldum told *Entertainment Weekly*. "To me the movie is about, 'What does it mean to live a rich, happy and full life?' It's a love story, it's a thriller. They have to save the ship. And it's about what it means to be human." ***JF***

ETA | 21 DECEMBER / PASSENGERS OPENS NEXT MONTH.



TRAILER BREAKDOWN

THE FINAL CLAW

LOGAN | Hugh Jackman makes his last stand in the final Wolverine film...



01

"Charles, the world is not the same as it was." Evidently neither is Wolverine. The years have finally taken their toll on his healing abilities, with scars now visible instead of pristine skin.



02

"Mutants, they're gone now," Logan laments. But not all. Meet new mutie on the block Laura Kinney, AKA X-23 (played by Dafne Keen). In the comics Kinney is a genetic clone of Logan.



03

Set decades after *Days Of Future Past*, and loosely based on Mark Millar's *Old Man Logan*, the film isn't just a final outing for Wolvie, but a dementia-ravaged Professor X too.



04

Boyd Holbrook is on bad guy duties as Donald Pierce, leader of the Ravagers. They're a cybernetically enhanced militia tasked with wiping out every last mutant.



05

Snikt! Buoyed by the R-rated success of *Deadpool*, Wolvie goes full beserker. The sombre, violent tone of the trailer hints at a superhero film unlike any other.



06

"Logan, you still have time." Professor X's words echo out as Wolvie, covered in blood, finishes digging a grave. But for who? *Logan* just shot to the top of our most-wanted list. ***JF***

ETA | 3 MARCH / LOGAN OPENS NEXT YEAR.

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YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

Film quotes pose as questions. Film stars try to cope.

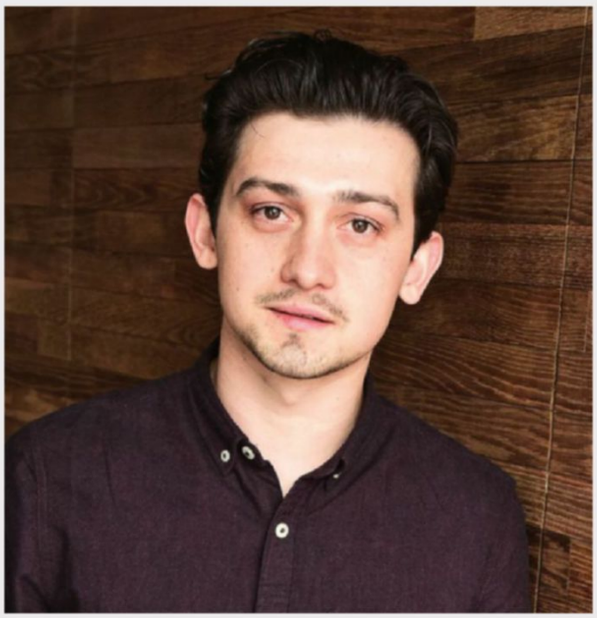
IN THE CROSSHAIRS THIS MONTH: CRAIG ROBERTS

You talkin' to me?
I am, and I'm pleased to say the reception to the first season of *Red Oaks* was really great. The second season feels a lot stronger, more mature. The tone has evolved. It feels more like a drama, with moments of comedy in it.

Do you feel lucky, punk?
To be alive is a good start. I feel lucky to do what I do. I never really set out to be an actor. I just gave it a go. I feel lucky that I never had that pressure moment to decide what I'm going to do with my life; and then it snowballs into something you can't remove yourself from. I went out to Hollywood just because I wanted to work, and was very lucky to be a part of what I did, with Seth Rogen and stuff. But the more I write and direct, the more I want to make stuff here. Especially in Wales. It's part of my DNA.

Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?
I never partied when I was younger. The complete opposite. I was a bit socially awkward and stayed in to watch films. Also, I felt groups back then were so defined – being 'cool' and stuff. Now, the people who used to be uncool are cool. I wish it was like that when I was back at school as I'd have been a lot cooler. People dancing doesn't make sense to me. Just moving their bodies to loud music. It's very bizarre, very uncomfortable.

Only two kinds of men get shot: criminals and victims. Which one are you?
You can't call yourself a victim, can you? [*laughs*] 'I'm a victim, me.' '*Really*, Craig? What are you a victim *of*?' I feel like a criminal acting, and also writing and directing, because my only education in it has been studying films, and that's been so enjoyable. I feel like somebody's going to find out.



'IT'S SO EASY TO CARE ABOUT STUFF TOO MUCH. I'M NOT A SURGEON. I'M JUST ACTING'

Do you ever have that feeling when you're not sure if you're awake or still dreaming?
I've suffered from sleep paralysis. I wake up, my eyes are open, but I can't move. I always feel like someone is in the room and sitting on my chest. It's kind of enjoyable, actually! The first couple of times it's weird.

If you could change something in your life, anything at all, what would it be?
To give less of a fuck. It's so easy to care about stuff too much. Especially with what I do. I'm not a surgeon. I'm just acting. It's make believe. So to care about it too much – to drive myself insane with it – is completely silly.

What's in California?
In-N-Out Burger – that's probably my favourite experience! As a kid growing up, Hollywood is like playing in the Champions League or the World Cup. But it only matters if that's what you want to do. If you want to do independent British films and dramas and stuff, then it doesn't really mean anything. I'm very grateful that I've been allowed to go there and work there and I'd love to continue to do that. Well, as an actor I'd like to, but as a director I wouldn't.

What would you do if you knew you had less than one minute to live?
I would probably call people that I very much like and give them five seconds each: "It was good to know you, goodbye."

When you can live forever, what do you live for?
I would just be selfish and try to do something with cinema, to change it. I find it incredible that people like Stanley Kubrick, who only had one lifetime, will live on. I'd just keep going at it. You could become amazing at everything. But you'd lose your loved ones. That must be tough. But I imagine you'd adapt. Ten years into your next lifetime, you'd find your people.

How deep is the ocean?
I have no idea if it's really six miles deep, but that's what Richard [*Ayoade*] told me to say [*in 2010's* Submarine]. Talking of the ocean, I saw *The Shallows* recently. I just didn't know what it was. Was it an underwear campaign? I liked the seagull. The seagull's the second lead! *JG*

ETA | OUT NOW / RED OAKS SEASON 2 IS STREAMING ON AMAZON PRIME.



TENNIS ANYONE? Roberts in *Red Oaks*, with on-screen parents Jennifer Grey and Richard Kind.

Questions taken from: Taxi Driver, Dirty Harry, Batman, Cowboys & Aliens, The Matrix, The Sixth Sense, Borat, Source Code, Twilight, Submarine

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MAKING OF

GANGSTERS' PARADISE

LIVE BY NIGHT | Production designer Jess Gonchor on building a new crime epic.

It's a very rich movie, saturated in sets and texture," says Jess Gonchor, production designer on Ben Affleck's new movie as director, *Live By Night*. Adapted from Dennis Lehane's 1920s-set novel, it's far removed from your traditional urban gangster pic, with Ybor City, Florida, forming the exotic backdrop as Affleck's Joe Coughlin rises in the local underworld.

STYLE BIBLE

While some gangster movies get overly stylised, Affleck didn't want the look of *Live By Night* to be too heightened. "His whole mantra… he just wanted to make it feel as real as possible," says Gonchor (*No Country For Old Men*, *Inside Llewyn Davis*). "That's something I agree with. I don't feel like you have to make a movie look pretty because that's what you want people to see. If the car was dirty, it should be dirty. If the house had a bad paint job, that's what you should see. So those things really validate the story and make it real."

SUNSHINE STATE

If anything will set *Live By Night* apart, it's the setting. "I had never seen a gangster movie that took place somewhere other than New York, Chicago, Boston – those type of big metropolises," says Gonchor. "Two thirds of this movie is gangsters in a very tropical environment." Certainly, while both *Key Largo* and Brian De Palma's *Scarface* were set in Florida, it's an environment rarely used for the Prohibition-era gangster film that Affleck was tackling. "It was easy to not fall into the same mould as those films, with guys driving down the street, leaning out the window with Tommy guns."

REBUILDING YBOR

One of the biggest challenges was to recreate Ybor City in the early 1920s. The production took over the town of Brunswick, Georgia, for three months – constructing speakeasies, removing lampposts, re-facing buildings and even shipping in dirt for the streets. "We were so lucky that the people let us do this!" says Gonchor. As he discovered, Ybor had a big Cuban presence at the time, making it distinctly different from the "cool, monochromatic" colour scheme seen in Coughlin's native Boston. "I just wanted to create this world where this gangster from New England all of a sudden finds himself in this colourful environment influenced by Havana, Cuba."



PERIOD DETAIL

While many of the interiors were shot on sound-stages in Los Angeles, reproducing elements from the '20s is no pushover. "It's definitely getting harder and harder," says Gonchor. "You're talking about things that are a hundred years old." In the case of the automobiles, old-school police cars had to be assembled "because they didn't go fast enough" for the chase scenes Affleck wanted to shoot. Other props had to be built too. "There were a lot of things shot up in the movie, so we had to build these things from scratch, so you could have take one, take two, take three…" ***JM***

ETA | 13 JANUARY / LIVE BY NIGHT OPENS IN THE NEW YEAR.

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DARK FORCES
The Sith make a strong showing at London's Identities exhibition.

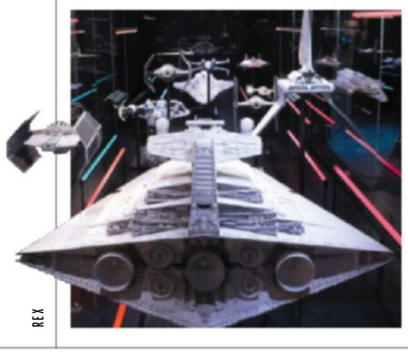
EXCLUSIVE

CHARACTER BUILDING

STAR WARS IDENTITIES | Take a tour through the Jedi Archives and build your own avatar at London's new Star Wars exhibition.

A certain galaxy far, far away is about to get a whole lot closer – so close, in fact, that you'll be able to travel there on the Tube. After planet-side excursions to Montreal, Paris, Munich and more, the Star Wars Identities exhibition lands at London's O2 this month, bringing with it hundreds of amazing props and costumes – and the chance to create your very own *Star Wars* character.

"When we started off [*this project*], we did think, 'There's been so many other *Star Wars* exhibitions. How are we going to do this? What are we going to choose as a subject?'" says Sophie Desbiens, communications director at Identities creators X3. "The obvious has been done – you know, space and technology, and robotics. Then we thought about why we love these movies so much. We ended up with the notion of the characters. We love the characters because we relate to them – even the robots."



REX

As you move around the exhibition, you gradually construct the make-up of your *Star Wars* avatar, based on their species, upbringing and beliefs. Aside from the crucial decision on whether you'll turn to the dark side, everything's underpinned by some serious real-world science. And we're not just talking a bunch of midi-chlorians-type mumbo-jumbo here – the exhibition is built around proper psychology and behavioural science.

"We read a lot about the hero's journey, so Joseph Campbell's writing," explains museologist Geneviève Angio-Morneau. "We started thinking about how a person grows from their childhood to their adult life. Obviously in *Star Wars*, we're following the lives in parallel of two characters, Anakin and Luke, from their youth, through their adolescence, until they grow up. We were thinking about how we explain how somebody becomes who they are."

Just in case you're thinking Identities sounds more science lesson than *Star Wars* celebration, fear not – the collection of artefacts on display is pure fan nirvana. Taking in pieces from the first two trilogies (and the occasional interloper from *The Force Awakens*, such as a First Order Stormtrooper), there's loads here to make you swoon – just for starters there's Han Solo in carbonite, spaceships galore, Jabba the Hutt's eyes, and early concept art for Yoda.

Even the most hardcore *Star Wars* aficionado stands to learn something about the movies, such is the level of detail attached to the information boards on the exhibits. "We actually hired a *Star Wars* geek for our team," Angio-Morneau laughs. "We wanted them to make some choices that maybe wouldn't seem obvious from a thematic perspective, but that fans would really appreciate. We really wanted to make sure a *Star Wars* fan would learn something new." ***RE***

ETA | OUT NOW / STAR WARS IDENTITIES: THE EXHIBITION RUNS FROM 18 NOVEMBER TO 3 SEPTEMBER 2017. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THEO2.CO.UK.

SHORT CUTS

What's stopping, what's starting in movieland...



RETURN OF THE TRANK
After his much-publicised meltdown during the making of *Fantastic Four*, Josh Trank spent a year in the wilderness. But now the *Chronicle* director is back, and he's bringing Tom Hardy with him. The pair are teaming up for Al Capone biopic *Fonzo*, set during the infamous mobster's twilight years, as dementia sets in and his violent past comes back to haunt him.

FIELD OF (BAD) DREAMS
10 Cloverfield Lane was an unexpected treat, but it seems 2017's Cloververse surprise has been rumbled: sci-fi thriller *God Particle* is reported to be a *Cloverfield* threequel. The film stars David Oyelowo, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Elizabeth Debicki, Daniel Brühl and Chris O'Dowd, and is about a team of astronauts who must fight for survival in an alternate reality after making a 'shocking discovery'.

YOU'RE HAVING A LAMP
Hot on the heels of *The Lion King*, another classic Disney animation is about to get the live-action treatment: musical fantasy *Aladdin*. In a somewhat unexpected move, Guy Ritchie is in talks to direct, with a script from *Big Fish* scribe John August. The Mouse House is also developing a live-action prequel to *Aladdin* titled *Genies*. Stath in a bottle, anyone?

JUNGLE FEVER



The bad news: Benicio del Toro has dropped out of Shane Black's *Predator* sequel. The good news: *Logan* bad guy Boyd Holbrook is in. Black has also been talking up the sequel, which starts shooting in February. Not only will it star a group of credible (and incredibly buff) guys, much like the original film it will be "scary" and "funny", while Fox has put its full weight behind an R-rating. ***JF***



ON SET

WHAT THE TRUCK?

MONSTER TRUCKS | Transformers meets E.T. in Chris Wedge's coming-of-age actioner...

Every time you come up with a movie concept you realise somebody's done it one way or another," director Chris Wedge tells *Teasers*. "But there's no movie with a monster in a truck!" Until now, that is, because Wedge's new film – yep, *Monster Trucks* – sees the 59-year-old filmmaker delivering exactly that, while giving the coming-of-age genre a stiff fuel injection.

It's June 2014 and *Teasers* is at a Volvo dealership in British Columbia. We're watching a hulking 1956 Dodge cock a wheel like a peeing dog, then hop excitedly on the spot. But rather than Optimus Prime's latest recruit, this is a key character from *Monster Trucks*, which has been shooting in Canada for three months and sees squid-like creatures using the titular vehicles as hosts.

It's a mad concept from writer Derek Connolly (*Jurassic World*, *Star Wars: Episode IX*), but according to Wedge, the joy was in finding the story's quirky heart. "I thought it was fun to take a concept that was so fantastic and improbable and make it feel as though it was really happening," he says.

Helping keep the film's wheels on the ground is star Lucas Till (*X-Men: First Class*). As 17-year-old loner Tripp, he spies a way out of his boring midwestern life when he encounters one of the creatures – and affectionately calls him 'Kreach'. Described as a "love story between the boy and the creature" by producer Mary Parent (*Kong: Skull Island*), *Monster Trucks* also features Danny Glover as Tripp's mentor ("He brings a lot of warmth to it," says Parent) and Jane Levy (*Don't Breathe*) as Tripp's buddy.

The real stars, though, are the titular gas-guzzlers; that 1956 Dodge is fully articulated and remote controlled by car coordinator Tyler Gaisford. "I didn't want it to look like an animated character, I wanted it to look like a truck that was alive," says Wedge, who makes his live-action debut, having previously directed *Ice Age* and *Robots*. "You don't have to move the characters' eyebrows; they can move their faces on their own," he chuckles of the difference between the two, promising that *Monster Trucks* contains "huge action" and an "emotional story with great characters". We're anticipating a wheelie good time. ***JW***

ETA | 26 DECEMBER / MONSTER TRUCKS OPENS NEXT MONTH.

SAY CHEESE
Tripp (Lucas Till) making friends with monsters.



Q&A LUCAS TILL

Did you relate to Tripp being a disenfranchised teenager?
Yeah, it's nice to bring out all those insecurities I thought I had put in the closet! When I was a teenager, I had plenty of friends, but I got picked on a lot, had my fair share of bullies. I had a lot of fun, too, though.

What was it like working with Danny Glover?
He's a little grumpier in the movie than he is in real life, if you can believe it... He's amazing; he's been doing this for a long time and doing it well and he's still a joy to be around.

Is it difficult working with a CG monster that'll be added in later?
Sometimes I imagine my little brother, but it's pretty hard. There's times where you're really into it and then you realise what a fool you look because you're trying to act like you're getting crushed by this thing, doing these gymnastic moves, but there's nothing there... You look like an idiot. ***JW***



REX



THE NEXT BIG THING

TEYONAH PARRIS

IS SHOOTING FOR STARDOM...

A graduate of Juilliard, Teyonah Parris guest starred in *The Good Wife* and *Mad Men* before making film folk sit bolt upright with her brassy turn in *Dear White People*. Spike Lee certainly took note, casting Parris as the lead in his explosive crime drama *Chi-Raq*. "I wanted to get this message out about gun violence," she says.

Your character, Lysistrata, is so forceful. How did you find that level of energy?
I researched a lot of powerful women who I look up to and then I just had to discover how this woman uses her body. Spike let me do what I felt was right. He's been very open about how dealing with women has not always been his strong point, but whenever something didn't sound or feel right, I'd go to him and we were able to come to common ground.

The gun culture in America is frightening. But many Americans feel the answer is more guns, not less…
Most Americans don't think that's the answer, but the people with the loudest voice and the biggest platform – the NRA – are saying that. I think we can make the process of attaining a weapon more thorough.

Many know you as Don Draper's secretary. Did you feel the importance of being the first black actress on *Mad Men*?
Absolutely. I knew there were no black people in a recurring role. Any time I look at a role, I always want to know, "What does it say about being a woman, and about being a black woman?" They don't all have to be positive but they have to say something.

You're pipelined to star in next year's *Buffalo Soldier Girl*…
It's the story of Cathy Williams, the only woman to be a part of the Buffalo Soldiers [*disguised as a man, she rose from slavery to join the ranks of the US Army's all-black regiments*]. It's an amazing story that needs to be told. *JG*

ETA | 2 DECEMBER / CHI-RAQ OPENS NEXT MONTH.

RYAN PFLUGER/AUGUST

CAN WE TALK ABOUT...?

SEPARATING ART FROM THE ARTIST

As new films from Nate Parker, Woody Allen and Mel Gibson bring the line between art and life under the spotlight once more, Teasers explores a passionately contested issue...

Can you separate art from the artist? In recent months, three films have re-ignited that highly contested debate. In the cases of Nate Parker's *The Birth Of A Nation*, Woody Allen's *Café Society* and Mel Gibson's *Hacksaw Ridge*, it's crucial to distinguish between the reasons why. But one question links them: can we judge a film apart from its maker's past, or from allegations about that past?

The debate has raged over Parker's portrait of the Nat Turner-led slave revolt in Virginia, 1831. Once an awards hopeful, *The Birth Of A Nation* became a controversy magnet when it emerged that Parker and the film's co-writer Jean McGianni Celestin had been accused of raping a female student at Penn State University in 1999. Parker went to trial and was acquitted. Celestin was initially convicted of sexual assault and sentenced to six months in jail, but had the decision overturned after securing a retrial, which prosecutors declined to take to court. In 2012, the alleged victim committed suicide.

In the *LA Times*, Gabrielle Union, a rape survivor who in the film plays a victim of rape, writes powerfully about her views on the movie. Noting her "stomach-churning confusion" after hearing the allegations, Union explains she took the role to give women a voice. "Women in general. But black women in particular. I knew I could speak to the audience about what it feels like to be a survivor."



Corey Stoll and Saul Stein in Woody Allen's *Café Society*.

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Others have tried to divide the film from its context. *Rolling Stone* critic Peter Travers wrote, bullishly: "I'll leave the playing God stuff to social media, where it thrives, and stick to what's onscreen." Parker, who attempted to address the issues on his Facebook page, argued that the film's theme is bigger than one man.

bystanders, including her husband, while the rape takes place off-screen, as if their feelings outrank the woman's pain.

The cases of other directors differ, but they have stirred debates about how to view a filmmaker's work. Woody Allen has never been charged with a sexual offence, so his story is different. But impassioned positions continue to be taken. His estranged son Ronan Farrow has accused the media of colluding with Allen's "PR engine" in its coverage of his films – and of sidelining the claims of abuse levelled at Allen by his daughter Dylan Farrow.

Mel Gibson's *Hacksaw Ridge* has been read as a bid for redemption from its star director. It focuses on Desmond Doss, a WW2 US army medic, Seventh Day Adventist and pacifist who found honour among comrades by saving 75 lives in the battle of Okinawa. Reviews have been generally positive: but will *Ridge* be enough to erase audiences' memories of Gibson's racist, misogynist outbursts?

ABOVE
Mel Gibson, here on the set of *Hacksaw Ridge*, has returned to the directing fold.

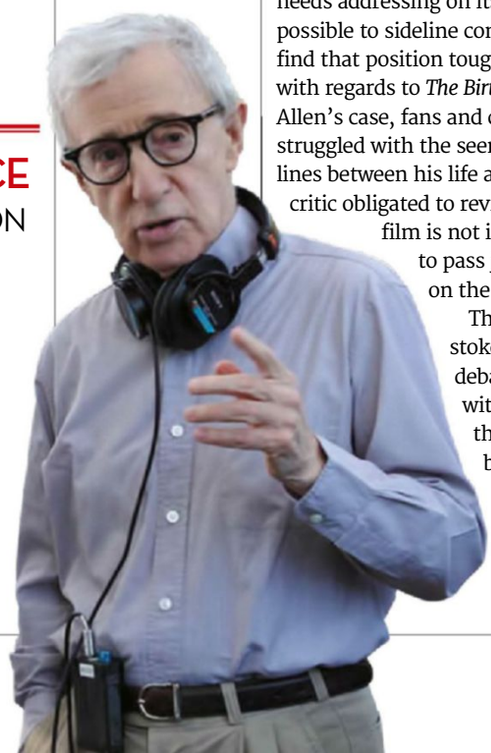
BELOW
Woody Allen, with his *Café Society* out this year, remains a prolific creator.

'I KNEW I COULD SPEAK TO THE AUDIENCE ABOUT BEING A SURVIVOR' GABRIELLE UNION

Others have countered that the context is too big, too complex to be silenced. In a forceful *New York Times* piece, feminist professor Roxane Gay wrote, "I cannot value a movie, no matter how good or 'important' it might be, over the dignity of a woman whose story should be seen as just as important." On Vulture.com, associate editor Dee Lockett criticises the scene in which Union's Esther is raped: Parker focuses on the faces of the male

The case of director Roman Polanski still causes debate. Polanski, then aged 44, fled America in 1978 after admitting to unlawful sexual intercourse with a 13-year-old girl. US authorities still want him extradited. When Polanski was arrested in Switzerland in 2009, a petition for his release was signed by 100-plus Hollywood luminaries, including Allen, Harvey Weinstein, Pedro Almodóvar and Whoopi Goldberg. The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, however, called for a boycott of his films, while others have accused Hollywood of failing to take his alleged crimes seriously.

For the critic wondering whether to focus on the film alone, or the filmgoer wondering whether to avoid a film, there's no easy answer. Every case needs addressing on its own terms. It is possible to sideline contexts, but many find that position tough to sustain with regards to *The Birth Of A Nation*. In Allen's case, fans and critics have long struggled with the seemingly blurred lines between his life and art: yet the critic obligated to review his latest film is not in a position to pass judgement on the allegations. The questions stoked by these debates leave us with one certainty: the tension between life and art isn't about to be reconciled anytime soon. *KH*





INDIE SPOTLIGHT

INDIAN SUMMER

JET TRASH | Robert Sheehan has a Goa in Charles Henri Belleville's hedonistic Brit thriller...

Charles Henri Belleville still remembers the moment actor Robert Sheehan came flying off his motorbike during the shoot for his stylish indie *Jet Trash*. "I was like, 'The film's over! It's a serious accident,'" the Scots-born director exclaims. "But Rob went to hospital... and came back to set later that day and continued to act. When your star/producer is that committed, there's no complaints."

An India-set thriller, based on Simon Lewis' 1998 novel *Go* about two backpackers reckoning with their recent past, Sheehan's injury wasn't the only difficulty. Take the scene in which Lee (Sheehan) and Sol (Osy Ikhile) manage to run over a cow. Using a vet to knock out the sacred beast, the dosed-up cow looked "relatively dead" – with the Indian crew about to "revolt", reports Belleville. "Then the cow just pings up and delivers the performance of the film!"

Bovine or otherwise, Belleville – who worked with Tom Hardy on his 2007 award-winning micro-indie *The Inheritance* – has an eye for casting. He snagged Sofia Boutella before she won her role in *Star Trek Beyond* to play the mysterious Vix. The actress had just come off *Kingsman: The Secret Service* when she flew to *Jet Trash*'s setting, Goa. "I loved the whole aspect of this film," she says, "how low-key, easy, laidback and intimate it was."

Indeed, so intimate that it became the film where *Misfits* star Sheehan and Boutella became a couple off-screen. Belleville can still remember Boutella's audition, during which she and Sheehan had to kiss. "It gets to that point and Rob and Sofia kiss – they don't just kiss with a little peck! I said, 'Oh, Sofia – you and Rob!' and she was like, 'I was acting!'"

While Boutella says of Sheehan, "he's very intelligent, eccentric and he makes me laugh", their coupling seems apt for what Belleville, 32, feels is a film that's essentially about friendship. "In some ways, the film was my experience of my twenties: you have friends, you move on, you evolve." Time to take out the trash. ***JM***

ETA | 6 DECEMBER / JET TRASH OPENS NEXT MONTH.

ON THE ROAD *Misfits*' Sheehan produces and stars in the stylish adap of backpacking novel Go.



Q&A ROBERT SHEEHAN

What attracted you to the character of Lee in *Jet Trash*?
When you travel, you meet this breed of guy who has next to nothing and just survives from day-to-day... [*and*] sort of charms his way around the world. There's something really lovely about that but those people aren't to be trusted. I'd met those guys and I thought, "I could play one."

How did you find working alongside Sofia Boutella?
How did I find it? I fell madly in love with her! We're still together, man! So, yeah, good!

You fell off a motorbike during production. Any bad injuries?
My left foot was... it was all open, smashed open. All of the skin on the top of my big toe just popped off! It was still hanging there – it looked like the movie *Hannibal* where Hannibal eats Ray Liotta's brain!

You're in Dean Devlin's directorial debut *Geostorm*. What can you say?
It's entirely disaster-driven... the idea came from Dean's daughter who said, "Why can't they just build a machine to stop global warming?" Out of the mouth of babes! And that set his head ticking. And you know what? It was lovely. There was only drama of the good kind, which is quite rare for a film of that size. ***JM***



BETWEEN TAKES

TERESA PALMER

THE HACKSAW RIDGE STAR TALKS LIFE ON SET...

What's the first thing you like to do when you arrive on set?
I dump all my stuff in the trailer and head straight to 'Crafty', which is what I call craft services. I collect a bunch of goodies I can eat in the hair and make-up trailer when I'm getting that done. Maltesers are my favourite.

What do you take with you on set?
Phone chargers, books... I have a big bag full of toys and a scooter and various things because my son [*Bodhi*] comes with me to work. I have to deck it out so it's a great environment for a two-year-old.

Do you have any on-set superstitions?
Not really, I'm pretty chilled. But I have this thing where I don't want to be super prepared for my scenes, [*laughs*] so I like to look at the scene and know the lines let's say 70 per cent... Even if somebody wants to run lines 10 times that morning, I always try to run them less. It has bitten me in the butt before, but typically, it really works!

Hot or a cold lunch?
A mixture. I'm a vegetarian so I'll do a big veggie pasta. Definitely I'm a bread girl; I'm bread and butter all the way. My son is the same. I'm like, "No, we need something more nutritious than that!" I'll usually also do the Greek salad, it's such a staple on a film set.

Best on-set experience?
For *I Am Number Four*, I got to learn how to ride a Ducati, the motorbike. They really gave me the reigns on that movie to become a stunt person; they had me do all my own stunts. The motorbike was amazing. Inbetween takes I'd whip around on the Ducati. I loved it so much! When the movie wrapped, I thought I'd become this motorbike superstar. [*laughs*]

Worst on-set experience?
On *Warm Bodies*, there was a scene where Nicholas Hoult and I cruise into this town that's overrun by zombies, and they had a rain machine. They turned the rain up so much that it was getting in my mouth and up my nose, so I couldn't say my lines properly. There were letters of the alphabet I couldn't say. Everybody thought I had some strange tick. I was like, "Guys, I swear, it's the rain!" *JW*

ETA | 2017 / HACKSAW RIDGE OPENS LATE JANUARY. LIGHTS OUT COMES TO DVD, BLU-RAY AND DIGITAL DOWNLOAD ON 12 DECEMBER.

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IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A FILM JOURNALIST

Editor-at-Large **JAMIE GRAHAM** lifts the lid on film journalism.

THIS MONTH GOING TO THE CINEMA ALONE

In the mid-'90s, as my fondness for movies ballooned into obsession, I soon discovered there would be times, and many of them, when I'd have to visit the cinema alone. Yes, I had friends (honest) who would happily accompany me to blockbusters or super-buzzy indies like *Pulp Fiction*, *Trainspotting* and *Fargo*, but getting them to give up time and cash for Wayne Wang's latest just wasn't happening.

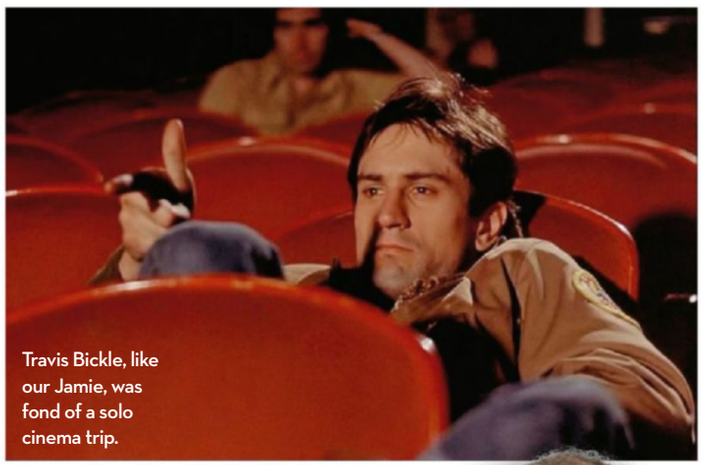
I immediately discovered the joys and pains of flying solo. On the plus side: I didn't have to kick my heels in a state of escalating agitation while waiting outside for a tardy mate; I could sit exactly where I chose; both armrests were mine! In the minus column: I lived in Portsmouth where people at that time just didn't go to the cinema alone, meaning I was frequently stared at like some outlandish, pitiful insect under a microscope. I didn't exactly help myself, of course, by going to see *Showgirls* alone, and I probably should have resisted telling four guys to "shut the fuck up" when they vociferously bantered all the way through *Dead Man Walking* – they waited outside for me afterwards.

KIDS & GORNO

Now, thankfully, things have moved on, though I still get a touch embarrassed attending certain movies alone. Just a couple of weeks ago I caught an afternoon showing of *Kubo And The Two Strings* at my local multiplex, having managed to miss all of the press screenings. It wasn't until I got there that I realised the entire audience would be made up of young children accompanied by harassed-looking parents, and I spent the film fretting how I must look like a bearded paedophile lurking in the corner.

Similarly, I sometimes feel uncomfortable watching extreme horror movies on my own – look at the wet-eyed mouth-breather hulking in the back row! – and I wanted to explain to my fellow audience members at *Bring It On* that it is cinema I adore, not perky cheerleaders; how, in the last few weeks, I'd also sat all by myself to view films by Audiard, Wenders and Sokurov!

The most awkward thing about going to the cinema alone is when a stupid/mischievous box-office clerk seats you right next to someone else on their own, with the cringe-factor exacerbated if it's a near-empty cinema. This happened to a colleague of mine, for *Fifty Shades Of Grey* of all movies, though he sensibly got back up and moved several spaces down the row upon seeing the lady next to him visibly clench.



Travis Bickle, like our Jamie, was fond of a solo cinema trip.

MY LEFT FOOT

But it's not always the cinema staff and their pesky allocated seating. Sometimes it's the punters themselves, and I've lost count of the number of times I've been sat all by myself in a deserted theatre only for someone to sit directly in front of me or in the seat beside me just as the film starts. Perhaps they're craving the communal experience that cinema can bring? More likely they're a first-class prat with zero social skills (says the guy going to the cinema alone).

My worst solo-viewing experience happened just last month. It was a baking hot day and the air-con was even more out of breath than I was. Sat in an empty row, I slipped off my trainers. Ten minutes into the movie, a guy sat next to me, so I quickly slid my right foot back into its trainer before tapping my left foot in circles. I couldn't find the trainer. Then I located it, and tried to brush it towards me. Firmer and firmer I tried, until eventually I got my foot right on top of it and *dragged*. It was at this point that the latecomer jerked like he'd been shot and got up and left – turns out I'd been playing footsie.

'I SPENT THE ENTIRE FILM FRETTING HOW I MUST LOOK LIKE A BEARDED PAEDOPHILE'



Jamie will return next issue... For more misadventures, follow: @jamie_graham9 on Twitter.

EXCLUSIVE

FAIRYTALE OF NEW YORK

COLLATERAL BEAUTY | Will Smith channels Jimmy Stewart and Ebenezer Scrooge in a bittersweet holiday fable.

Most Christmas movies wear their hearts on their sleeves. But for maximum emotional catharsis, it's hard to top classics such as *It's A Wonderful Life* and *A Christmas Carol*. As *The Devil Wears Prada* director David Frankel was well aware when he agreed to helm *Collateral Beauty*…

The film stars Will Smith as Howard Inlet, a New York ad executive whose world crumbles around him when he loses his young daughter. His friends and co-workers, played by Kate Winslet, Edward Norton and Michael Peña, stage an intervention to save both his mind and business, recruiting a company of theatre actors – Helen Mirren, Keira Knightley and Jacob Latimore – to take on the roles of Death, Love and Time (respectively), in an effort to convince Howard they've received a series of letters he's written to them in his despair.

"The DNA of *It's A Wonderful Life* and *A Christmas Carol* are baked into the DNA of *Collateral Beauty*," Frankel tells *Total Film*. "Allan Loeb, the screenwriter, drew on our memories of those movies and then made something completely original and special. This whole idea of who intervenes in our lives is always interesting. There's also a part of those movies which involve ghosts and angels. At Christmas time we all sort of connect with the spiritual side of things a little bit more. We want to believe in some kind of other that will get us past our darkest moments."

The "collateral beauty" of the title, explains Frankel, is a byproduct of Howard's heartache. "The idea that your darkest times can open you up to a connection that's new and inspiring is the best part of what we've done here."

Mirren, who plays the leader of the ragtag troupe, says she was captivated by a character who, despite her role as Death, has the liveliest personality in the film.

"I don't think I've ever played an actress in a film. But I did street theatre in New York in the '70s, so I kind of know where she's coming from. It was good because it forced me into being more outward than I normally am as an actress. I wanted her to be very exuberant, because I did not want any sense of gloom. So I just had to energise her and make her positive. And I absolutely did not want to come in in a big black hood and black gloves!" ***JMC***

ETA | 26 DECEMBER / COLLATERAL BEAUTY OPENS NEXT MONTH.



Helen Mirren plays an actress who takes on the role of Death.



Jacob Latimore, Helen Mirren and Keira Knightley as the theatre troupe.





ABOVE
Kate Winslet and Edward Norton are two of Howard's worried friends.

BELOW
Howard (Will Smith) being chased down by Time.







Q&A WILL SMITH

If you could write a letter of complaint to Time, Love or Death, which would you choose?
I would add a fourth. I would write a letter to Anger. Anger is causing more problems than Time, Love, or Death are in today's world.

How do you portray the pain of losing a loved one?
Before taking on this film, they gave my father six weeks. So it was a beautiful experience for me to dive into the world of the character, and into [*psychiatrist*] Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and *The Tibetan Book Of Living And Dying* and those ideas, and address them in my real life; and then learn and grow, and then be able to deliver that growth to the character. This film was at an absolute perfect time in my life to expand as an actor and as a person.

Has this experience changed how you'll approach your next roles?
We are in a business where we're allowed to construct gifts to humanity. If it only helps one person, you get to help somebody. But every once in a while you get something like *Collateral Beauty*, where it hits issues we all have to deal with. That's where I'm at in my life and career right now – do people need to see this? What is the intended gift that this piece of art will be? ***JMC***



GUESS WHO'S BACK?

RULES DON'T APPLY | Warren Beatty returns with a golden-age romance starring the young Han Solo...

Warren Beatty is a Hollywood acting, directing, writing and producing legend, but it's been 15 years since he last appeared on screen, and 18 years since he made a contribution behind the camera. Taking time out to raise a family with Annette Bening, it was always going to take something special to tease him back.

Which brings us to *Rules Don't Apply*. Set in late '50s and early-'60s Hollywood, this unconventional romantic-comedy tells of a young Hollywood starlet, Marla Mabrey (Lily Collins), and her ambitious driver Frank Forbes (Alden Ehrenreich, soon to be piloting the Millennium Falcon as a young Han Solo). Both work for reclusive billionaire Howard Hughes (Beatty), whose number one rule is that his employees should never date each other. Naturally, the pair fall in love, a situation made all the more complicated by her being a devout Baptist and him a Methodist who also happens to be engaged to his junior high-school sweetheart.

"I didn't write a biopic of Howard Hughes at all," says the 79-year-old Beatty, who here makes the comeback of all comebacks by choosing to don *all* of his hats – he writes, produces and directs, too. "This is more a love story of two young people in 1958 who happen to be working for Hughes. It explores the sometimes comical and sometimes sad consequences of American puritanism in the late-'50s and early-'60s, when I first came to Hollywood."

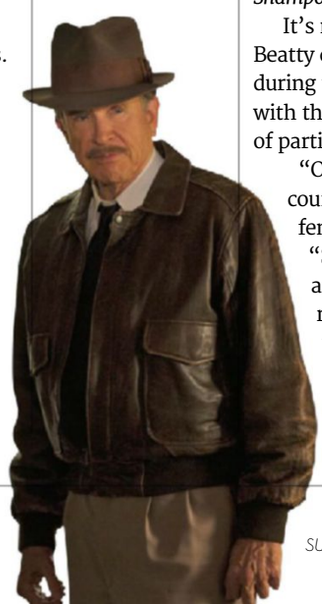
Beatty made his own Hollywood debut opposite Natalie Wood in *Splendor In The Grass* (1961), a tale of love and sexual repression, heartbreak and madness. It was one of the movies that helped crack open the door ready for the New Hollywood filmmakers to barge in and trash outmoded formulae in favour of morally murky, transgressive pictures that plugged into the counter-culture times. Beatty, of course, was front and centre of the movement as cinema dismantled societal precepts about family, religion, sexuality, war, politics and more – he starred in and/or created such key movies as *Bonnie And Clyde* (1967), *Shampoo* (1975) and *Reds* (1981).

It's not by chance, then, that Beatty chose to set *Rules Don't Apply* during this time of turbulent change, with the rise of women's rights being of particular interest.

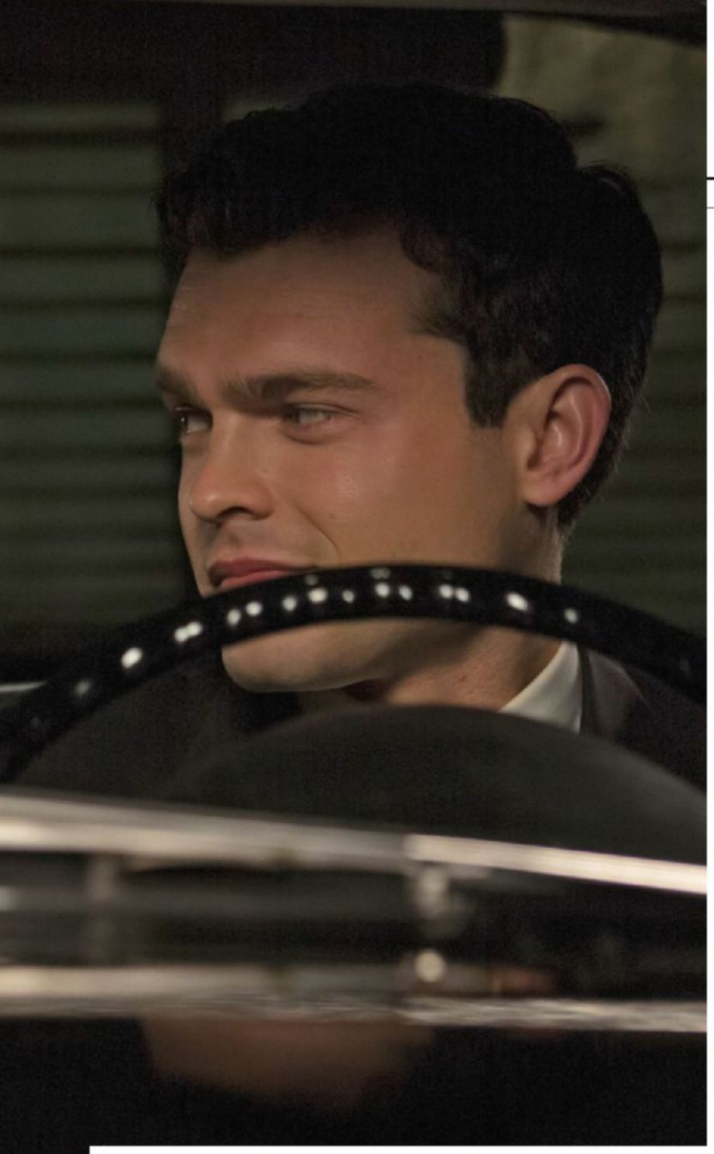
"Over that brief period, the country saw a strong burst of feminism," he points out. "Some refer to the late-'50s and early-'60s as the sexual revolution. I think it's fair to say there were real developments in the liberation of women, and that it resulted in a lot of turmoil, re-thinking and denial. And it continues."

ABOVE
Lily Collins' actress falls for Alden Ehrenreich's driver.

BELOW
Beatty is back as actor, director, writer and producer.



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ABOVE
Marla (Collins) is an aspiring starlet who works for Howard Hughes (Beatty).

With the superb cast rounded out by Alec Baldwin, Martin Sheen, Annette Bening, Ed Harris, Oliver Platt, Candice Bergen, Matthew Broderick and Steve Coogan – to say nothing of the award-winning artisans who head all of the departments – *Rules Don't Apply* promises to be an all class affair. ***JG***

ETA | 27 JANUARY / RULES DON'T APPLY OPENS EARLY NEXT YEAR.

THE WAITING GAME

Beatty's not the only one to take an extended break...

STANLEY KUBRICK

Twelve years passed between Kubrick's 12th movie, *Full Metal Jacket*, and his 13th (and last), *Eyes Wide Shut*. Still, we should be grateful that his marital meltdown drama happened at all – Kubrick had been tinkering with the idea of adapting Arthur Schnitzler's *Dream Story* since the '60s, and the shoot ran from November '96 to June '98. He died six days after showing a locked cut to stars Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.



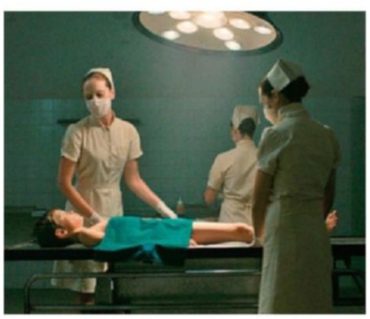


TERRENCE MALICK

Making his stunning debut in 1973 with *Badlands*, Malick waited five years until treating viewers to sophomore effort *Days Of Heaven*. And then... silence. For 20 years. The disappearance of such an acclaimed filmmaker led to wild tales (he was teaching in the Sorbonne, he'd gone in search of ancient Assyria), but one thing's for sure: his 1998 return with poetic, philosophical WW2 drama *The Thin Red Line* was worth the wait.

LUCILE HADZIHALILOVIC

In 2004, French director Hadzihalilovic scored an international arthouse hit with *Innocence*, set in a mysterious, all-female boarding school and drawing comparisons to *Picnic At Hanging Rock* and the surrealism at work in David Lynch's movies. A fertile career surely beckoned, but this year's *Evolution* ended an 11-year gap – Hadzihalilovic struggled to raise funds for her subtle sci-fi horror, with its sinister sensuality and slippery subtexts.





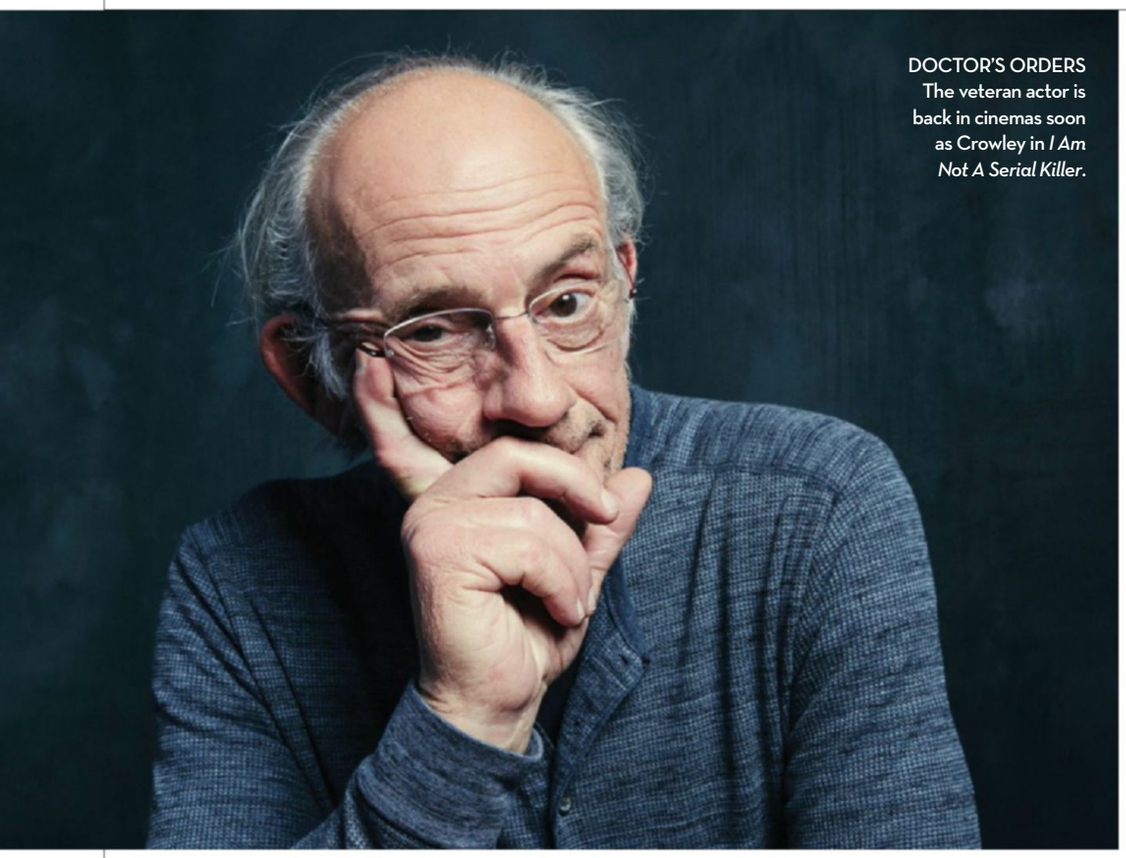
WHIT STILLMAN

In the '90s, *Metropolitan*, *Barcelona* and *The Last Days Of Disco* established writer/director Stillman as a purveyor of articulate comedies of manners. He won several awards and an Oscar nomination for his *Metropolitan* screenplay, yet proceeded to vanish for 13 years between 1998's *Disco* and 2011's *Damsels In Distress*. The silence was not self-prescribed but rather attributed to repeated struggles to get projects up and running.

DAVID LEAN

Given his two Best Director gongs and many ace films (*Brief Encounter*, *Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist*, *The Bridge On The River Kwai*, *Lawrence Of Arabia*) in his career at that point, it's hard to fathom how one critical savaging for *Ryan's Daughter* in 1970 could account for a self-imposed 14-year exile until *A Passage To India*. But that's one explanation; the other is that Lean simply worked on several projects that failed to come to fruition. ***JG***





DOCTOR'S ORDERS
The veteran actor is back in cinemas soon as Crowley in *I Am Not A Serial Killer*.

THE HERO

CHRISTOPHER LLOYD

A screen legend reflects on an enviable career...

He framed Roger Rabbit, got altogether ooky with the Addams Family and helped to fix the space time continuum. In fact, there's not much Christopher Lloyd hasn't done. You'll see him next as mysterious OAP Mr. Crowley alongside Max Records in eerie indie *I Am Not A Serial Killer*, but before that, we ask... what's up, Doc?

Crowley's an unusual character. What do you look for in a role?
I like to feel it's a good script and the character triggers my imagination. Crowley was very intriguing. He's a man who's living a seemingly happy married life with a woman he's in love with. He seems like everybody's loveable grandpa but doesn't want to leave the love of his life.

Your relationship with Max is incredibly tense. Did you avoid each other on set?
I don't know that we made a point of avoiding each other. I don't like to mingle too much with other cast members because I feel it might affect my effectiveness when I do a scene. If I'm supposed to really despise somebody, I feel if I get too friendly it might be difficult to hate them.

***One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* was your first film. That's a biggie...**
I already idolised Jack Nicholson even before *Cuckoo's Nest*. I was intimidated. I'd been doing theatre in New York and went up for many films through the '60s with nothing coming of it. I didn't impress, period. So to start out with Jack, Milos Forman and the wonderful cast was huge.

***Back To The Future* must be the gift that keeps giving...**
It's amazing and has changed my life in a way I can't even pinpoint. So many people have come up to me to say how it changed their lives, either in career choices or from people who were growing up in not the best circumstances who would watch the film and it gave them a positive outlook. I'm really happy to be a part of something that's been so beneficial to people. Not many films succeed in that on the scale that *Back To The Future* has.



CLASSIC LLOYD
(Top to bottom) Lloyd's defining turn in *Back To The Future*, as an evil Toon in *Roger Rabbit* and as Crowley in the upcoming *I Am Not A Serial Killer*.

'MY EYES NEARLY BLED IN MY EFFORTS TO KEEP THEM OPEN, BUT IT ADDED SOMETHING'

Do you have a favourite scene?
I remember chasing the train in *Back To The Future III* on horseback. They left it for a stuntman dressed as Doc Brown to pull himself from the horse onto the train. I was right there galloping alongside it, the grip was within reach and I so wanted to do it but I thought if it doesn't go right who knows what might happen.

Keep any mementos from the shoot?
I have a shirt. My fiancée has forbidden me from wearing it in public so it hangs in the closet. Maybe I'll put it on someday and sneak out.

***Who Framed Roger Rabbit* was groundbreaking. Were you confident that it would work?**
They had gathered top animators from all over the world and it had a feeling that it worked. There was certainly an atmosphere that Zemeckis knew what he was doing and I trust him totally with his judgement on creative matters.

And Judge Doom doesn't blink...
Yeah, I felt Judge Doom was a Toon and doesn't necessarily blink. With Uncle Fester in *The Addams Family*, I felt that he didn't blink either. I'd have some pretty long takes and my eyes nearly bled in my efforts to keep my lids open but I thought it added something.

***Addams Family* looked like a fun set...**
Oh yes, it was. There was a camaraderie among us. When we were all sitting around in character there was a feeling we began to have of being a real family, that we really existed as the Addams Family. It was great.

Any roles you regret turning down?
Scorsese was doing a religious film about Christ and his disciples and wanted to cast me as St. Matthew and I declined. I would have loved to work with Scorsese but I thought that wasn't quite right. We make mistakes! *SB*

ETA | 9 DECEMBER / I AM NOT A SERIAL KILLER OPENS NEXT MONTH.

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SOUND BYTES

Quotable dialogue from this month's movies – and their stars

"I LOVE THIS JOB. I GET A MASSIVE KICK OUT OF IT. AND IF I CAN KEEP GETTING A KICK OUT OF IT, I WILL."

So... **Daniel Craig** wants to be Bond again now? We're confused.



83,871

Number of onscreen deaths in *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, cinema's highest ever bodycount.



2

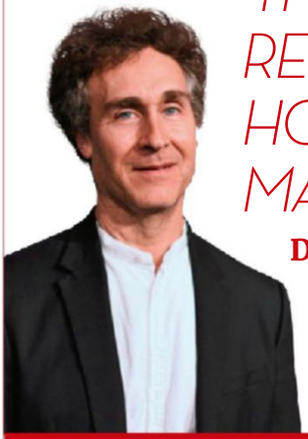
The number of roles Benedict Cumberbatch has in *Doctor Strange*: Strange himself and villain Dormammu.



"IT'S AN OBVIOUS THING, YOU WIN AN OSCAR AND YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HAPPY. I DIDN'T FEEL THAT WAY."

Anne Hathaway didn't give two figs about her golden baldie.





"IT'S GOING TO REVOLUTIONISE HOW PEOPLE MAKE SEQUELS."

Doug Liman is setting a high bar for *Edge Of Tomorrow 2*.

A DOG'S LIFE

Filming has begun on Wes Anderson's next film – an animation about the lives of dogs. Jeff Goldblum, Bryan Cranston and Bill Murray are rumoured to be voicing characters.

GOOD THING

BAD THING



TIM OUT

Director Tim Miller has quit *Deadpool 2*. Miller reportedly wanted a more stylised sequel, while star Ryan Reynolds preferred a follow-up more like the original.

"[*MY MOM*] WAS LIKE, 'DON'T MESS THIS UP!' 'CAUSE BILLY DEE – LIKE, THAT'S HER THING."

The first person new Lando Calrissian, **Donald Glover**, has to impress? His mum.



"I WOULD COME BACK AS ALLEN BAUER, AND I WOULD GO OFF WITH CHANNING TATUM."

Tom Hanks wants to woo a merman in the *Splash* remake.



REX

"KES"

Ken Loach's poignant coming of age drama about a lad with a mind of his own - and a life he shared only with Kes.



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STEVE MARTIN DARYL HANNAH

ROXANNE





Steve Martin and Daryl Hannah star in this enchanting 80s classic, on Blu-ray for the first time in the UK in a Dual Format edition, November 2016.

EUREKA!

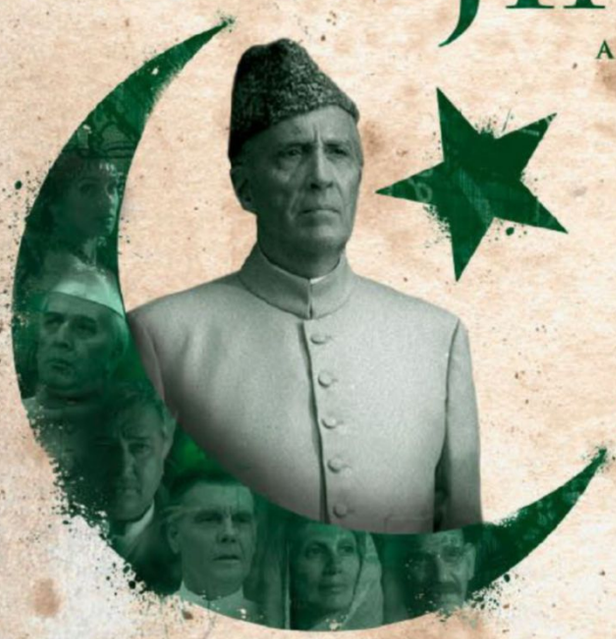
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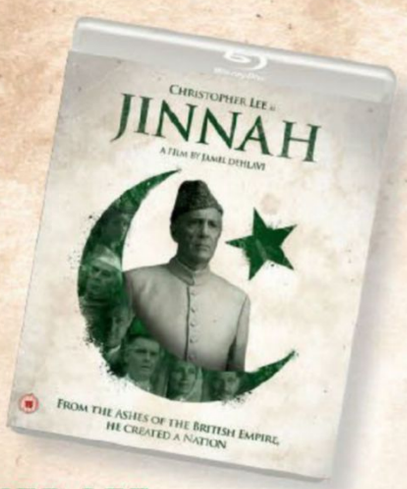
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CHRISTOPHER LEE AS

JINNAH

A FILM BY JAMIL DEHLAVI





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BIG SCREEN

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46

SULLY

Hudson, we have a problem...







NEW RELEASES

OUT NOW		
The Accountant	★★★	p49
Doctor Strange	★★★★	p52
Jack Reacher: Never Go Back	★★★★	p57
Let's Be Evil	★★	p54
You've Been Trumped Too	★★★	p51

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The Music Of Strangers	★★★★	p56
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The Birth Of A Nation	★★★★	p50
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Life, Animated	★★★★	p49
The Pass	★★★★	p56
Snowden	★★★	p55

16 DECEMBER		
Uncle Howard	★★★	p56

ALSO RELEASED

We couldn't see them in time for this issue, so head to gamesradar.com/totalfilm for reviews of the following:

TITLE	RELEASE DATE
Allied	25 November
Bad Santa 2	23 November
Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them	18 November
Moana	2 December
Rogue One: A Star Wars Story	15 December

For more reviews visit gamesradar.com/totalfilm



CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Clint Eastwood
STARRING Tom Hanks, Aaron Eckhart, Laura Linney, Mike O'Malley
SCREENPLAY Todd Komarnicki **DISTRIBUTOR** Warner Bros
RUNNING TIME 96 mins

SULLY

Splash landing...

★★★☆☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

The real-life events of Flight 1549 might have been tailor-made for a Clint Eastwood movie. On 15 January 2009, a US Airways Airbus, having just taken off from LaGuardia en route to Charlotte, North Carolina, ran into a flock of Canada geese whose ingested bodies disabled both engines. Veteran pilot Chesley 'Sully' Sullenberger, realising he had neither the height nor the speed to make it back to LaGuardia nor to any adjacent airport, decided to land his plane on the Hudson River – without losing a single one of the 155 passengers and crew members, who were all safely taken off by boat after evacuating onto the plane's wings and inflatable slide.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

UNITED 93 *2006*
Heroic passengers foil terrorist plot aboard one of the 9/11 planes.

BRIDGE OF SPIES *2015*
Hanks as stoic negotiator in Cold War Berlin.

DEEPWATER HORIZON *2016*
Stunningly vivid reconstruction of Gulf of Mexico oil-rig disaster.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

Sully (played by – who else? – Tom Hanks), calm, unpretentious, above all utterly professional, is a hero after Eastwood's own heart. Indeed, Clint himself is just that kind of filmmaker, making *Sully* a worthy celebration of professionalism at its modestly understated best. It's well-made and impeccably acted by all concerned, while the re-enactment of the emergency landing itself – which we get to see twice – is convincing down to the last detail.

It's undeniably exciting, too: the passengers casting terrified glances at each other, the stewardesses yelling "Brace! Brace!", the water hurtling up to meet us. The only problem is that the film, with its famous, headline-dominating storyline, is predictable from start to finish.

ANY WHICH WAY TO LAND

OK, most of us know what happened on that January day, and those that don't will soon be reminded. So there's a certain amount of adrenaline in seeing the watery touch-down brought off so perfectly, but no tension: no one's gonna die.

Realising this, Eastwood and his screenwriter, Todd Komarnicki (working from Sully's own published account of events, *Highest Duty: My Search For What Really Matters*), shift their focus to the aftermath of the incident: when Sully and his co-pilot, Jeff Skiles (Aaron Eckhart), are hauled up in front of a National Transportation Safety Board panel headed by a grim-faced Mike O'Malley (*Concussion*, *R.I.P.D.*) to be bombarded with hostile questions – were they sober, were they distracted by any personal preoccupations and, most crucially, why didn't they try to make it to an airport? Just to add to the pilots' ordeal, the NTSB claimed that the plane's left-hand engine was still capable of functioning.

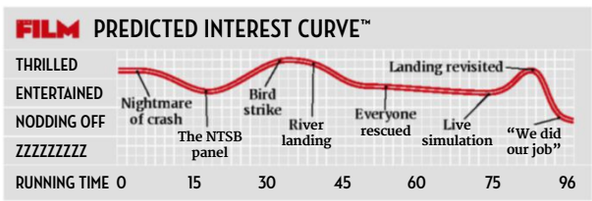
The dramatic irony here is strong. In public, in the press and on television screens all around the world, Sully and Skiles are being hailed as heroes, guys who kept their cool where a second's hesitation, let alone panic, could have proved fatal.

Privately, meanwhile, before the panel, every decision they took is being called into question – to the point at which even Sully himself starts to have doubts, nightmares about the disaster that might so easily have happened. "What if I did get this wrong?" he asks

'THE ONLY PROBLEM IS THE FILM IS PREDICTABLE FROM START TO FINISH'



She knew she should have grabbed that halloumi salad from the trolley when she had the chance.



his wife Lorraine (Laura Linney) when he phones her from his hotel room. "I've delivered a million passengers over 40 years, but in the end I'm going to be judged on 208 seconds."

EASY JET

The film is at its most intriguing when we're shown the elaborate reconstructive processes behind the panel's inquisitions. First off we get the computer simulations, from which it appears that there would have been time to make it to an airport. This is then confirmed by live re-enactments carried out – and filmed – in a flight simulator at the aircraft-maker's HQ in Toulouse.

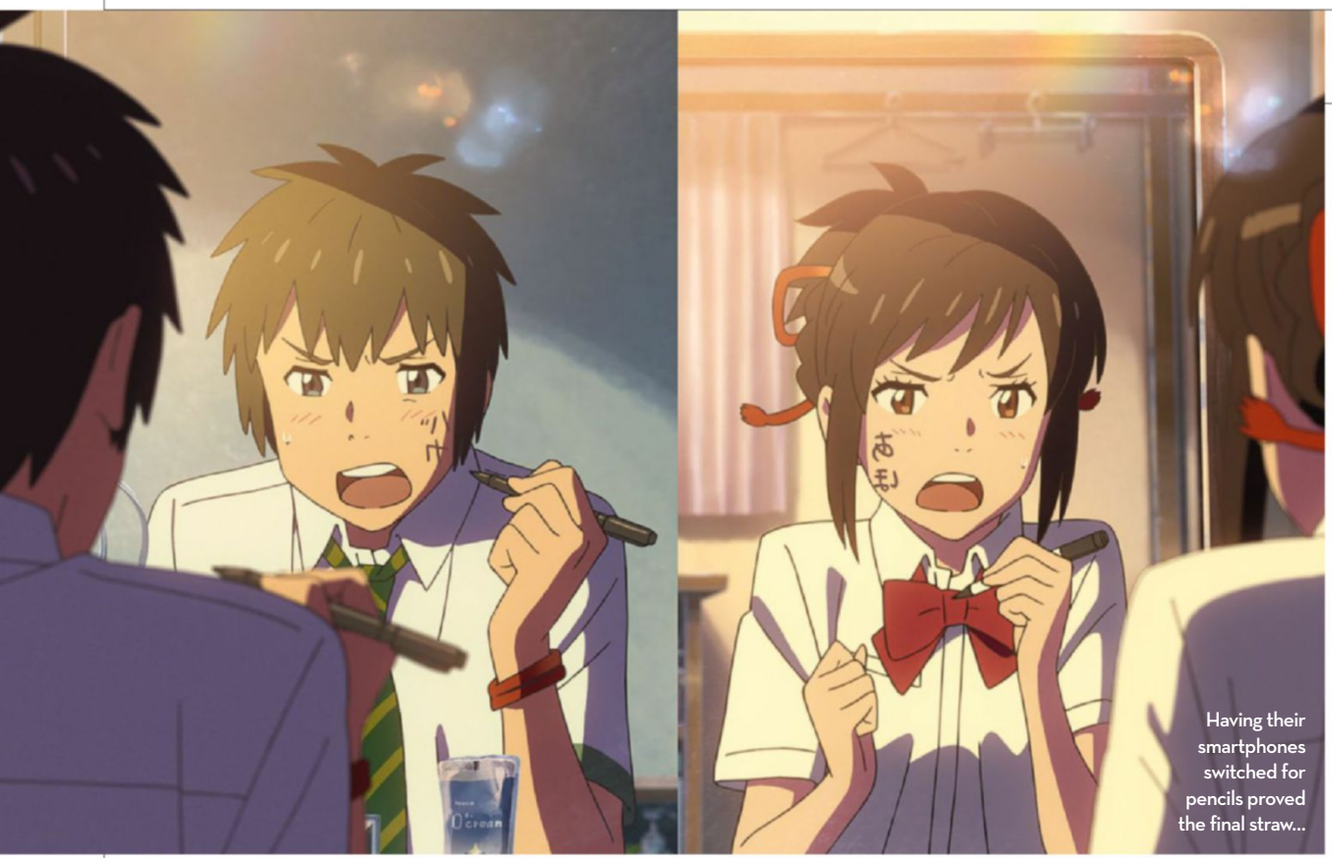
At this point it seems as if things are going against our pilot heroes. But here, too, we can already foresee the outcome. First because if Sully and Skiles really had been disciplined, we'd have all heard about the worldwide outcry; and second, because who could imagine an Eastwood movie in which selfless, seasoned professionals wind up getting crapped on by a bunch of industry bureaucrats?

At 96 minutes, *Sully* is by some measure the shortest movie Eastwood has directed to date, and even then it feels a little padded out. A couple of flashbacks to Sully's past – his initial training as a pilot, and his wartime flying experience – don't add much.

There's a warm sense of camaraderie between Hanks and Eckhart, swapping affectionate banter (even if poor Linney, who never shares the screen with Hanks, gets stuck with the 'worried but supportive wife on telephone' role), and some heartening shots under the end-credits of the real Captain Sully meeting up with a few of the passengers whose lives he saved. But ultimately – and oddly enough, given that this is a largely faithful account of rare real-life heroism – it all just seems a little too comfortable. ***Philip Kemp***

THE VERDICT

Sully is a skilfully made reconstruction of a recent real-life feat of heroic professionalism. But narrative tension is sorely lacking.



Having their smartphones switched for pencils proved the final straw...

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED..

CHUNGKING EXPRESS *1994*
Vibrant pop, melancholy and missed connections from Wong Kar-wai.

MEMENTO *2000*
Slippery memories and twisty plotting power Christopher Nolan's breakout.

DONNIE DARKO *2001*
Jake Gyllenhaal faces time loops, growing pains and tragedy.

FOR MORE REVIEWS VISIT GAMESRADAR.COM/TOTALFILM

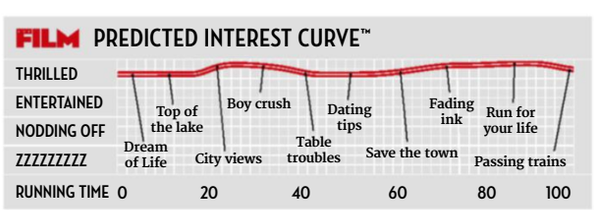
YOUR NAME

Swap and awe...

★★★★★ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

Is Makoto Shinkai 'the new Miyazaki'? Comparisons to Studio Ghibli's animation master accompanied Shinkai's previous films: lustrous visions such as *Voices Of A Distant Star* (2003) and *The Garden Of Words* (2013), but Shinkai emerges as his own man with this deeply affecting, richly imagined and lushly gorgeous fantasy. A time-travelling, body-swapping, gender-twisting, disaster-based teen romance, *Your Name* resembles little else around.

A hit in Japan, Shinkai's genre-bender begins with a twist on meet-cute clichés between provincial teen-girl Mitsuha (Mone Kamishiraishi) and Tokyo teen-boy Taki (Ryûnosuke Kamiki) – after a teasing opening montage involving comets falling, the pair awake to find themselves inhabiting each other's bodies.



CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Makoto Shinkai **VOICES** Ryûnosuke Kamiki, Mone Kamishiraishi **SCREENPLAY** Makoto Shinkai **DISTRIBUTOR** National Amusements **RUNNING TIME** 106 mins

Once he's got us on our toes, Shinkai keeps us there. The outer-body premise is well-milked for gentle humour to start – Taki becomes fixated on his newfound breasts – but the playful pitch doesn't swamp feeling. Raised in an environment of tradition, Mitsuha pines for city life; Taki, meanwhile, wrestles with the tragi-comic inarticulacy of adolescent masculinity. Smartphones are cleverly used to co-ordinate the plot-lines, a co-ordination given a metaphorical parallel in the cords Mitsuha is tasked with meticulously braiding.

The braiding becomes more intricate as the duo wonder why fate linked them and, in a twist on the will they/won't they cliché, whether a meeting is in the stars. Time loops, tumbling comets, lost towns and themes of eco-disaster mix in the ensuing action, a mash-up of melancholy raptures, mind-warping metaphysics and cosmic cataclysms.

It all sounds like too much to take onboard. But Shinkai holds his material steady. Between style and substance, he knows just what's needed to keep the plot focused, viewers rapt and emotions engaged. Working with Ghibli-schooled animation director Masashi Ando (whose credits also include 2015's senses-stoking *Miss Hokusai*), Shinkai makes glowing work of his digi-mation vistas: the limpid images glisten as if radiated with emotion. But don't think about pausing to admire the scenery. Races against time and musical montages usher us breathlessly towards the climax, chivvied along by vibrant songs from Japanese band Radwimps.

Adding more flavours, the end stretch recalls Wong Kar-wai's rainy-day romanticism in its mix of sliding doors and deferred liaisons. A satisfying conclusion seems like too much to expect from so rich a weave, but Shinkai's careful weaving of poignancy, plot threads and metaphor delivers one. For Mitsuha and Taki, the outcome is best experienced, not explained. For animation fanciers new to Shinkai, it could be the beginning of a beautiful relationship. ***Kevin Harley***

THE VERDICT

Prepare to be spirited away. A brain-scrambler to make hearts swell, Shinkai's giddy romance brims with emotion and invention.

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THE ACCOUNTANT

★★★☆☆ OUT NOW

A high-concept throwback that takes its silliness seriously, *The Accountant* is efficiently entertaining despite its missteps. Ben Affleck plays Christian Wolff, a maths genius with autism whose book-cooking abilities make him a useful asset for criminal organisations. He also has assassin skills to rival Jason Bourne. *Warrior* director Gavin O'Connor keeps the action slick and pacy, leaving you little time to question the more incredulous moments. There's at least one twist too many, but Affleck grounds it with a committed, refreshing portrayal of autism within a mainstream thriller. ***Matt Maytum***



I AM NOT A SERIAL KILLER

★★★★☆ OUT 9 DECEMBER

Based on the novel by Dan Wells, Billy O'Brien's mumblecore horror follows its own twisted path, much like its protagonist: teen sociopath/psychopath John Wayne Cleaver (Max Records). Whether dissecting people in his mother's funeral parlour, or personality traits with his therapist (Karl Geary), he is constantly fighting the urge to kill. Intelligent, original and committed, it's also a little meandering. But Records cuts a strikingly amoral figure, and the sight of Christopher Lloyd intoning poetry over dying embers reminds us what a wonderful actor he is. ***Matt Glasby***



GIMME DANGER

★★★★☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

"Bizarre", "sub-literate" and "tasteless", the critics called Iggy Pop and his sonic trailblazers when they first pitched up amid the sort of '60s hippie acts that could have been "created in meetings". Yet decades later, The Stooges are revered as one of the greatest, most influential rock 'n' roll bands ever. A conventional music doc about an extremely unconventional group, Jim Jarmusch's portrait explores the rise, fall and legacy of the fearless proto-punk outfit, whose juvenile delinquent guitarist James Williamson, rather hilariously, jacked it all in to become a Silicon Valley company man. ***Ali Catterall***



THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN

★★★☆☆ OUT 30 NOVEMBER

Hailee Steinfeld gives a winning turn in this frothy coming-of-ager as outcast Nadine, a 17-year-old whose feelings of insecurity are scarcely alleviated by her friend (Haley Lu Richardson) copping off with her brother (Blake Jenner). Grown-ups are no help, be they Nadine's widowed mum or a curmudgeonly history teacher; and nor does romance do the trick. What's a girl to do? Clearly no stranger to John Hughes movies, writer-director Kelly Fremon Craig brings a spiky wit and a warm-hearted, nerd-friendly finale to a comedy that wants for nothing but a little substance. ***Neil Smith***



A UNITED KINGDOM

★★★☆☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

A remarkable story doesn't quite get the film it deserves in Amma Asante's respectable romantic biopic, adapted from Susan Williams' book *Colour Bar* by Guy Hibbert. It begins in 1947, as Seretse Khama (David Oyelowo), in London studying law, falls for insurance clerk Ruth Williams (Rosamund Pike). When it emerges that Seretse is heir to the throne of Bechuanaland, their marriage meets opposition from her father and the British government. Yet Asante's polite, well-mannered film rarely raises the heartbeat. Oyelowo and Pike capture their characters' courage, but never the romance that kept their belief burning. ***James Mottram***



LIFE, ANIMATED

★★★★☆ OUT 9 DECEMBER

An autistic boy who stopped talking at the age of three is coaxed out of isolation through his love of Disney cartoons in a documentary that unexpectedly champions the House of Mouse as a life-changing force for good. To Owen Suskind, the likes of Bambi, Simba and Peter Pan are not just resourceful heroes but useful guides to empathy and self-awareness: qualities he will need as he prepares to trade the nest for sheltered accommodation. The clips are a delight, as are the cameos from two of *Aladdin*'s voice actors. Best of all, though, is the mini-animation fashioned out of Suskind's Walt-inspired scribblings. ***Neil Smith***



THE WAILING

★★★★☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

An outbreak of homicidal rage in a sedate Korean village fuels this pell-mell hybrid of horror and police procedural. Is a poisoner on the loose, or could the mysterious Japanese stranger in the woods really be a demon? For bumbling sergeant Jong-Goo (Kwak Do-Won), the case soon becomes personal. Genre specialist Na Hong-jin (*The Yellow Sea*) succeeds through excess. Pitched at a level of hysterical intensity, Na's frantically staged set-pieces (fights, chases, mad shamanistic rituals) are underscored by cacophonous drumming. This is a queasily funny, often exhausting but genuinely unnerving watch. ***Simon Kinnear***



Parker's Nat Turner is taken on the road as a preacher for hire.

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Nate Parker **STARRING** Nate Parker, Armie Hammer, Jackie Earle Haley, Penelope Ann Miller **SCREENPLAY** Nate Parker **DISTRIBUTOR** 20th Century Fox **RUNNING TIME** 120 mins

THE BIRTH OF A NATION

Real-life rebels...

★★★★☆ OUT 9 DECEMBER

Sold for a record $17.5m after its award-winning Sundance premiere, Nate Parker's stirring drama was all set to be this year's *12 Years A Slave*. Until, that is, controversy relating to Parker's acquittal from a rape case in 1999 hit the news, turning it into a PR nightmare. While the story may well have torpedoed the film's chances, it shouldn't detract from just how well-made this biopic of Virginia slave Nat Turner is.

Taught to read the Bible as a child, Turner (Parker, commanding) spends his adult years preaching to fellow slaves, after his cash-strapped master Samuel (Armie Hammer) takes his Baptist charge on tour. As Parker sees the extent of slavery and the daily horrors faced by its victims, he's sickened enough to lead a bloody rebellion in 1831. Parker doesn't lay on the violence quite as thickly as Steve McQueen did in *12 Years* – and the film is all the more effective for it, though one scene, in which a hunger-striking slave is force-fed, is the sort you'll never want to watch again. With fine performances from Hammer and Jackie Earle Haley, as a vile slave patrol captain, it's an astutely judged piece of filmmaking. ***James Mottram***

THE VERDICT

An impressive directorial debut – and acting turn – from Parker that deserves to be seen, despite the PR firestorm.



IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT

★★★★☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

Director Norman Jewison nailed the interracial cop dynamic with his 1967 thriller, whose murder-mystery plays second fiddle to the relationship between Sidney Poitier's city detective and Rod Steiger's Deep South sheriff. Poitier is majestic as Virgil Tibbs; Steiger won the Oscar, though – a testament, perhaps, to the film's faintly self-congratulatory tone. ***Neil Smith***



WE ARE THE FLESH

★★★★☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

Challenging *Baskin* as 2016's most nightmarish genre movie, this disturbing hallucination from Mexico sees homeless siblings (Diego Gamaliel, María Evoli) wander into a building where Noé Hernández offers succour and terror. Under his spell the pair engage in cannibalism, incest and more as an affront to (and reflection of) Church and State. Think Luis Buñuel spliced with Hieronymus Bosch. ***Jamie Graham***



THE NEW MAN

★★★☆☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

When director Josh Appignanesi (*The Infidel*) and his wife, Devorah Baum, learn she's pregnant, they're so overjoyed they decide to make a documentary about it. But Dev feels her mind's being eroded, while Josh worries he'll be a hopeless dad – and then there's devastating news. How much of this is reportage, how much re-stagings, is anyone's guess. Much of the time, Josh is clearly sending himself up. ***Philip Kemp***



UNITED STATES OF LOVE

★★★☆☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

Washed-out pastels match a cold, dispassionate exploration of love and anguish in this Polish drama from Tomasz Wasilewski. Interweaving four stories, Wasilewski navigates obsession and rejection to the backdrop of a '90s Soviet Union on the brink of collapse. What could have been a bold relationship study with a feminist slant is too detached to make much impact. ***Matt Looker***



THE DREAMED ONES

★★★☆☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

Ruth Beckermann's remote but rewarding film centres on an affair conducted via letters between mid-20th Century Jewish poet Paul Celan and Austrian writer Ingeborg Bachmann. You crave more intensity of feeling, but shots of the actors (Anja Plaschg, Laurence Rupp) resting provide room for reflection in an intimate, nuanced performance piece. ***Kevin Harley***



MUM'S LIST

★★☆☆☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

Adapted from St. John Greene's bestseller, this drama recounts the real-life story of a bereaved West Country father (Rafe Spall) left to bring up two sons when his beloved wife Kate (Emilia Fox) dies of breast cancer. It clearly aims to move, but the cutting between three timelines dilutes emotional impact. And despite Spall and Fox's efforts, there's something too good to be true about the characters. ***Tom Dawson***



THE COMING WAR ON CHINA

★★★☆☆ OUT 5 DECEMBER

America's preparing for war against China, according to veteran journalist John Pilger, whose doco is a passionate if long-winded polemic on America's presence in the Pacific. He explores America's '50s nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, talks with protesting locals and dives into China's cultural evolution. Interesting, but hardly subtle. ***Stephen Kelly***



YOU'VE BEEN TRUMPED TOO

★★★☆☆ OUT NOW

Timely follow-up to 2011 doc *You've Been Trumped*. Catching up with Scottish farmers the Forbes, who tried to prevent The Donald building a golf resort in their area, it shows how they were left without water for five years, while complaints were met with lies and bullying tactics. The implication's clear – he can't be trusted – but it's often frustrating, not revelatory viewing. ***Matt Looker***

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Ben Younger **STARRING** Miles Teller, Aaron Eckhart, Ciarán Hinds, Katey Sagal **SCREENPLAY** Ben Younger **DISTRIBUTOR** Icon **RUNNING TIME** 117 mins

BLEED FOR THIS

More knockoff than knockout...

★★★☆☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

The true-life story of Vinny Pazienza (played with conviction by Miles Teller) is remarkable: lightweight champion of the world in 1987, he broke his neck in a car crash only to defy medical opinion and get back in the ring. Even more remarkable is how it took Hollywood 30 years to turn it into a movie.

Trouble is, this sort of triumph-against-all-odds tale has fuelled dozens of sports movies, a fair few of them centred on plucky pugilists. The youthful arrogance smashed to pieces, the sozzled, grizzled coach (superbly played by an almost unrecognisable Aaron Eckhart), the training montage, even the fractious Italian-American family... all have been seen before, and many times over, meaning events of a miraculous nature feel somewhat banal.

Still, *Bleed For This* is made with palpable commitment by all involved and there are scenes to jolt viewers out of their déjà vu – none more so than the sickening car crash, though some queasy business involving the metal contraption screwed to Paz's head also cuts through any comfort that comes with watching tried-and-tested tropes. The fight scenes, like the film itself, are solid but nothing new. ***Jamie Graham***



Paz knew the bell had rung, but those hands just felt so damn good...

THE VERDICT

This biopic coulda been a contender if superior specimens like *Rocky* and *Raging Bull* hadn't landed their punches first.

CERTIFICATE 12A **DIRECTOR** Scott Derrickson
STARRING Benedict Cumberbatch, Tilda Swinton, Rachel McAdams, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Mads Mikkelsen **SCREENPLAY** Jon Spaihts, Scott Derrickson, C. Robert Cargill **DISTRIBUTOR** Disney
RUNNING TIME 115 mins

DOCTOR STRANGE

Cumberbatch makes the cut...

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Who are you in this vast multiverse, Mr. Strange?" asks Tilda Swinton's guru The Ancient One. Arrogant, ambitious, egotistical and downright rude, Doctor – as he keeps reminding anyone who'll listen – Stephen Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch) is straight out of the Marvel playboy playbook. Like *Iron Man*'s Tony Stark before him, this brilliant neurosurgeon wallows in luxury (expensive watches, sports cars, flash pads). You just know he's going to be taken down a peg or two.



Strange was unconvinced his new hand was an improvement...

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

SHERLOCK *2010–?*
Cumberbatch's smarty-pants sleuth might even give brainbox Strange a run for his money...

SINISTER *2012*
Derrickson and *Strange* co-writer Cargill's eerie 8mm-inspired chiller.

CONSTANTINE *2005*
An earlier Swinton foray into comic territory, playing Keanu Reeves' archangel protector.

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Strange's journey along the path of enlightenment is a typically quicksilver affair: funny, thrilling and engrossing, it sprinkles some fresh ingredients into the MCU pot to ensure this doesn't feel like just another spandex saga. It introduces the title character just in time to take his place in 2018's *Avengers: Infinity War*. On this showing, he's a welcome addition.

Directed by Scott Derrickson (*Sinister*), *Doctor Strange* is typical of a Kevin Feige–produced Marvel movie, almost seamlessly introducing the protagonist as if he's an old friend. An origin story crafted with the minimum of fuss (or background), it briskly establishes Strange's aloof disposition. And it doesn't take long before the moment that will change his life: a violent car crash leaving him unable to use the most vital tools of his trade, his hands.

A PERFECT MORDO

Cruelly rejecting the help of friend/lover/fellow medic Christine Palmer (Rachel McAdams), Strange is willing to try any form of advanced surgery that might repair his crippled digits – which ultimately leads him to Nepalese capital Kathmandu. There he meets Mordo (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a strait-laced pupil to Swinton's teacher, who, it transpires, has the ability to access powers beyond our Earthly realm.

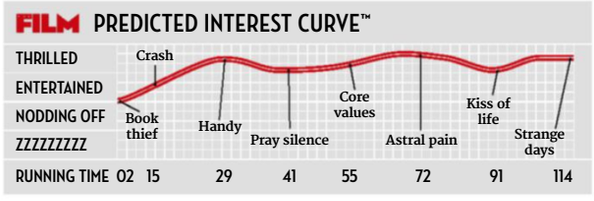
If the Avengers' brief is to fight physical enemies, we're told, these sorcerers protect the world against mystic threats. Operating from several sanctums across the globe, they can leap between realities and dimensions, portal-hopping to present-day London and New York in an instant. There's something quite arresting about seeing these warriors running through the streets of Westminster as passers-by gawp.

While Strange learns to tap into these energies and tinker with time (one scene, as he plays back-and-forth with the eating of an apple, is particularly cool), he remains desperate to find the key to healing his hands – still scarred and shaky from surgery. Meantime, he must confront Kaecilius (Mads Mikkelsen), a former pupil to The Ancient One who opens the film by stealing pages from her sacred texts pertaining to eternal life.

This pre-credits sequence leaves viewers with a teaser for what *Doctor Strange* has in store visually: a battle between The Ancient One and Kaecilius staged on ever-shifting buildings that seem to fold into each other, *Inception*-style. Flaunting hugely impressive CGI, these kaleidoscopic effects set the tone

'WITH HUGELY IMPRESSIVE EFFECTS, IT'S MARVEL'S TRIPPIEST MOVIE YET'





for Marvel's trippiest movie yet. Derrickson and his designers certainly live up to the surreal landscapes showcased in the original Steve Ditko-created comics.

CLOAK HABIT

True, there's a nagging feeling that *Doctor Strange* is picking up on all-too-familiar tropes seen in everything from *Star Wars* (mentor/pupil complexities) to *The Matrix* (alternate realities) to even *Groundhog Day*, albeit without Bill Murray. But Derrickson and his co-writers Jon Spaihts and C. Robert Cargill conjure enough originality, despite the inevitable showdown on which the fate of the world hangs.

Wisely, the script comes lightened with humour to puncture any lingering pomposity. In truth, not all of it works; references to Adele, Eminem and Beyoncé feel forced. But there are some nice gags too – from Strange's misbehaving Cloak of Levitation to the trailer-teased moment when Mordo hands Strange a card with the mysterious-sounding 'Shamballa' on it. "It's the Wi-Fi password," he explains. "We're not savages."

With the cast led by the British trio of Cumberbatch, Ejiofor and Swinton – not forgetting Benedict Wong, who plays The Ancient One's guardian of the sacred texts – it's pleasing to see a Marvel movie that feels so homegrown. Cumberbatch may have played the genius before – Sherlock, Stephen Hawking, Alan Turing – but he seasons Strange with just the right amount of arrogance to ensure we don't immediately fall for his charms.

Sadly, McAdams is left with the thankless girlfriend role, though she's game enough to ensure it never becomes a major weak spot. Derrickson has a riot, meanwhile, filling the screen with some seriously psychedelic visuals. From references to Aldous Huxley's *The Doors Of Perception* to the sight of Strange with hands growing out of his fingers, this might just be the MFO – Most Far Out – MCU movie yet. ***James Mottram***

THE VERDICT

Cumberbatch fits Doctor Strange like a pair of snap-tight surgical gloves, in yet another MCU triumph. Beautifully designed, brilliantly executed.



The man from Del Monte had an unfortunate orange-juice accident.

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTOR** Spike Lee **STARRING** Teyonah Parris, Nick Cannon, Wesley Snipes, Samuel L. Jackson **SCREENPLAY** Kevin Willmott, Spike Lee **DISTRIBUTOR** Vertigo Releasing **RUNNING TIME** 127 mins

CHI-RAQ

Spike Lee gives it both barrels...

★★★★☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

Spike Lee doesn't do subtle, but then he's hardly cracking nuts. *Chi-Raq*, set in Englewood, Chicago, is a state-of-the-union address on America's hot issues of gangs and guns. Full of righteous anger packaged in signature swagger, it's his most purposeful and provocative film in years.

Updating Greek play *Lysistrata* to the windy city (where more Americans have been killed in the last 15 years than in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts combined), *Chi-Raq* sees rival gangs the Spartans and Trojans trading bullets. With no end in sight, Lysistrata (a terrific Teyonah Parris), the girlfriend of the Spartans' leader, persuades womenfolk on both sides of the divide to take control of the situation. "No peace, no pussy," goes their slogan, with the ladies modelling bling-tastic chastity belts until all weapons are discarded.

The satire is more sledgehammer than scalpel and *Chi-Raq* is both sententious and offensive, but then what do you expect – or, indeed, want – from a Spike Lee joint? With its rhyming couplets, bursts of rap, swathes of broad humour, rampant machismo and a garishly suited Samuel L. Jackson serving as a one-man Greek chorus, this throbs with the kind of passion and (people) politics that so energised *Do The Right Thing*. ***Kevin Harley***

THE VERDICT

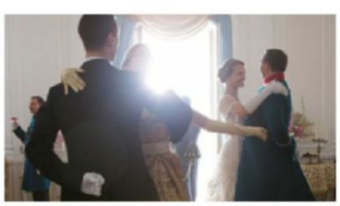
Right from the first frame the urgency rarely wanes as Lee juggles fireworks, firearms and feminism.



I AM BOLT

★★★☆☆ OUT 28 NOVEMBER

A year in the life of Usain Bolt, as the superstar sprinter prepares for the Rio Olympics. Granted comprehensive access to Bolt and his team, British filmmakers Benjamin and Gabe Turner capture the gruelling training required for elite-level athletics. It's not the most probing doco, but the man himself, mobbed wherever he goes, emerges as a genuinely charismatic, likeable individual. ***Tom Dawson***



THE HERITAGE OF LOVE

★★☆☆☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

This cumbersome Russian romance follows two love stories set a century apart: one in contemporary Paris, between Andrey (Dima Bilan) and Vera (Svetlana Ivanova); the other between their ancestors, a soldier and a duchess during Russia's Civil War. Soaring strings and dramatic glances *tell* you they are in love, but director Yuriy Vasilev never really shows it. ***Stephen Kelly***



INDIGNATION

★★★★☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

This month's second Philip Roth adaptation (after *American Pastoral*) is writer-producer James Schamus' elegant directorial debut. Set in 1951, it stars Logan Lerman as Marcus Messner, a Jewish-born atheist at odds with fellow students at his Ohio college. Schamus keeps us engaged, and Sarah Gadon gives good support as the student responsible for Marcus' abrupt sexual awakening. ***James Mottram***

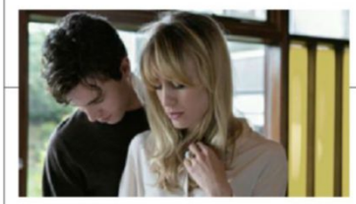


LET'S BE EVIL

★★☆☆☆ OUT NOW

Techno-fear looms large in *Let's Be Evil*, a play on Google slogan 'Don't Be Evil'. Directed by Martin Owen, it follows Jenny (Elizabeth Morris) as she looks after kids in a learning facility only visible through augmented-reality glasses. This unreliable reality suits horror, especially when the kids take control. Yet there's no mystery: just people looking scared until a twist that isn't worth waiting for. ***Stephen Kelly***

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THE INCIDENT

★★★☆☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

The strained relationship of a young, affluent couple (Tom Hughes, Ruta Gedmintas) is tested further by their run-ins with a tough, teenager (Tasha Connor). The class clash is beautifully captured by cinematographer Pau Castejón, and Gedmintas gives a powerful performance of middle-class angst and guilt. But writer/director Jane Linfoot's feature debut is ultimately too timid to be tense. ***Matt Looker***



THE SEARCH FOR SIMON

★★★☆☆ OUT 30 NOVEMBER

There's a scrappy, amateurish charm to this sci-fi comedy, a story about a man (director Martin Gooch) who's convinced that his long-lost brother has been abducted by aliens. Gooch, who cast himself for budget reasons, is fairly jarring next to more natural actors, including former Doctor Who companion Sophie Aldred, but does land a few deadpan laughs. ***Stephen Kelly***



DOG EAT DOG

★★★☆☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

As a director (*Affliction*) or writer (*Taxi Driver*), Paul Schrader is not known for comedy. So this oddball crime caper, based on the Eddie Bunker novel, judders like an old jalopy at times. But there's pleasure to be found watching *Wild At Heart* co-stars Nicolas Cage and Willem Dafoe let rip as hapless crooks trying to stick it to the man. Schrader has fun, wallowing in the lurid detail and bloody violence. ***James Mottram***



SNOWDEN

★★★☆☆ OUT 9 DECEMBER

A biopic about whistle-blower Edward Snowden should be tailor-made for Oliver Stone, yet *Snowden* isn't as angry or accomplished as you might expect. Joseph Gordon-Levitt is credible as the former NSA contractor, but Stone gets side-tracked by his relationship with Lindsay Mills (Shailene Woodley) and Rhys Ifans' leering CIA suit. Still, Stone's heart is in the right place. ***James Mottram***

CERTIFICATE 15 **DIRECTORS** Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne **STARRING** Adèle Haenel, Jérémie Renier **SCREENPLAY** Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne **DISTRIBUTOR** Curzon Artificial Eye **RUNNING TIME** 113 mins

THE UNKNOWN GIRL

A who-Dardenne-it...

★★★★☆ OUT 2 DECEMBER

Are art-house darlings Luc and Jean-Pierre Dardenne going mainstream? In *Two Days, One Night*, Marion Cotillard went on a quest to save her job. Now, another leading French actress – rising star Adèle Haenel – is playing detective, only this time there's no deadline. Call it *Many Days, Endless Nights*.

When the titular woman is found dead, it sparks a crisis of conscience for doctor Jenny Davin (Haenel), who didn't answer when the girl knocked on her door. What follows is an unusual detective thriller, as Jenny sets out to find out the victim's identity, not for justice but to absolve her sense of guilt. With fluid elegance, the Dardennes' handheld sequence shots balance narrative tension with insight into a flawed character. Jenny is kind and capable, but also a workaholic incapable of accepting anything other than perfection.

As a detective thriller, it's arguably a little too tidy. Not for the Dardennes the insoluble conundrums of Michael Haneke: once the cast's biggest Euro-star arrives, the odds are slashed on Jenny solving the crime. Yet Haenel justifies her buzz with a tough/tender performance that keeps the Dardennes' remarkable run of social-realist fables on track. ***Simon Kinnear***



THE VERDICT

The Dardenne brothers deliver a perceptive portrait of professional integrity under pressure.


Life is like a box of chocolates.

CERTIFICATE TBC **DIRECTOR** Jim Jarmusch **STARRING** Adam Driver, Golshifteh Farahani **SCREENPLAY** Jim Jarmusch **DISTRIBUTOR** Soda Pictures **RUNNING TIME** 113 mins

PATERSON

Kylo Ren's gentler side...

★★★★☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

Living and working in Paterson, New Jersey, Paterson (Adam Driver) is a bus driver who scribbles clear-eyed, economical poetry in his spare time. At night, he eats with his wife, Laura (Golshifteh Farahani), then walks their wheezing bulldog to a local bar, where he enjoys a single jar while listening to others converse before returning to bed ready for the next routine day.

In other hands, this study of small-town life and shimmering dreams (Laura also has desires, including becoming a country singer) might have been mocking and mean-spirited, but *Paterson* has higher intentions. Gentle and warm-hearted, it avoids being twee courtesy of beguiling performances and writer/director Jim Jarmusch's graceful direction, which, like Paterson's prose, is alive with patterns and rhythms but neither self-conscious or fussy.

It is rare to find a film that features a loving, fully functional marriage. It is rarer still to find one centred on a would-be artist who stands back from the world to question all that he sees, as artists must, but is content with his solitude and unscathed by demons. Such humbly exotic ingredients make for a mesmeric treat of a film – one of Jarmusch's best. ***Jamie Graham***

THE VERDICT

No Kylo Ren-style anger, just the ebb and flow of daily life. And the best canine performance since *The Artist*'s Uggie.



UNCLE HOWARD

★★★☆☆ OUT 16 DECEMBER

Aaron Brookner's documentary about his uncle, a forgotten filmmaker, feels so personal it's almost like reading a diary. Howard Brookner may not be a familiar name, but his place in US indie-film culture deserves recognition: among other things, he directed Madonna in *Bloodhounds Of Broadway* before dying in 1989, aged 34. Here Brookner captures his uncle's unique spirit and courage. ***James Mottram***



THE PASS

★★★★☆ OUT 9 DECEMBER

Russell Tovey delivers a career-best performance in Ben A. Williams' sexy, disturbing and poignant film, which sees promising footballer Jason (Tovey) aiming for the big league. *The Pass* is narratively simplistic but psychologically complex, pivoting on Jason's relationship with Ade (Arinzé Kene), a teammate and potential lover. Williams crafts a tragi-comic atmosphere and plays deftly with expectations. ***Josh Winning***



MAGNUS

★★★☆☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

Hot on the heels of *Queen Of Katwe* comes another portrait of a real-life chess prodigy: a documentary about Magnus Carlsen charting his ascent to world champion. Benjamin Ree's pic has the suspense of a sports story as it shows this diffident newcomer dispensing with opponents. At 76 minutes, however, it's too brief to convey the intellect and almost mystical ability that underpin Carlsen's success. ***Neil Smith***



THE MUSIC OF STRANGERS

★★★★☆ OUT 18 NOVEMBER

Though spotlighting world-class cellist Yo-Yo Ma and the musicians he curates, this doc isn't really about music. The focus is on the individuals, emphasising the unifying power of song – as well as Ma's humanitarianism. As one group member says: "I think he sees himself as someone who wants to change the world, and he happens to have a cello with him half the time." ***Matt Looker***

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JACK REACHER: NEVER GO BACK

★★★★☆ OUT NOW

Be thankful Tom Cruise did go back: this sequel sees him grow into the role of writer Lee Child's tough, taciturn ex-military investigator. Even better, director Edward Zwick services the action beats, but is more interested in finding the man beneath the machine. *Never Go Back* sees our hero head for Washington to visit the woman doing his old job, Major Susan Turner (Cobie Smulders). Finding her jailed, he busts her out and the two hunt down the truth – or make that three, for Reacher learns that teen tearaway Sam (Danika Yarosh) might be his daughter. The makeshift family dynamic is a joy, while digging into Jack's past makes this the *Skyfall* of Reacher stories. ***Jamie Graham***



CREEPY

★★★☆☆ OUT 25 NOVEMBER

After a violent altercation, detective Hidetoshi Nishijima swaps being a cop for a college job and the safety of the suburbs. While he's lured back by a cold case, his wife (Yûko Takeuchi) tangles with an oddball neighbour (Teruyuki Kagawa). Could they, just possibly, be connected? Engrossing, if a little slow, this Thomas Harris-alike thriller from Kiyoshi Kurosawa (*Cure*, *Pulse*) has remake stamped all over it. Kagawa is unnerving but expert Nishijima is frustratingly slow to catch on, reasoning: "Even the most dangerous criminals seem super nice to their neighbours, so I guess he's safe." ***Matt Glasby***



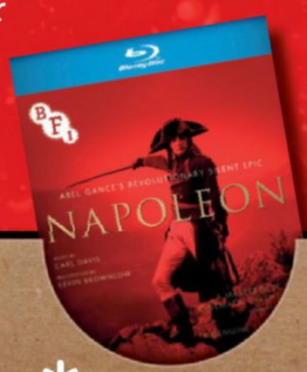
BLUE VELVET

★★★★★ OUT 2 DECEMBER

Plot-wise at least, David Lynch's 1986 masterpiece now seems positively conventional given the noggin-noodlers to come – *Lost Highway*, *Mulholland Drive*, *Inland Empire*. But this detective noir/fairytale most grim is anything but straightforward, as two teens (Kyle MacLachlan and Laura Dern) follow the trail left by a severed ear to deep-dive into a suburban netherworld of kidnapping, murder and S&M. Isabella Rossellini's singer Dorothy is a heart-rending open wound, Dennis Hopper's Frank Booth one of cinema's great nutjobs, and Lynch's control a thing of nightmarish beauty. ***Jamie Graham***

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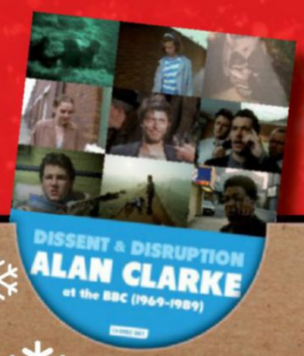
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BOX OFFICE CHARTS 03.10.16 – 30.10.16



DOCTOR STRANGE
End-credits stings! In the first, the Cloak of Levitation meets its nemesis, the Dressing Gown of Downwardness; in the second, Rocket Raccoon asks a reluctant Doc to sort out his worms.



THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN
Sequel pitches! Emily Blunt bothered by a seabird (The Gull On The Train); Prince Edwards' commute (The Earl On The Train); even more drunkenness (The Hurl On The Train).



THE ACCOUNTANT
The success of the Ben Affleck starrer will surely lead to a DJCU: Dull Jobs Cinematic Universe. Get ready for The Box Packer, The Data Entrist and the biggie, Auditors Assemble.

UK TOP 10



Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	The Girl On The Train ★★★	£20.4M	£20.4M	4
2	Bridget Jones's Baby ★★★★	£14.8M	£46.2M	7
3	Trolls ★★★★	£14M	£14MM	2
4	Doctor Strange ★★★★	£9.2M	£9.2M	1
5	Inferno ★★★	£7.2M	£7.2M	3
6	Jack Reacher: Never Go Back ★★★★	£5.6M	£5.6M	2
7	Storks ★★★	£5.2M	£5.2M	3
8	Miss Peregrine's Home... ★★★★	£3.5M	£11.5M	5
9	Deepwater Horizon ★★★	£3.2M	£5.2M	5
10	Ouija: Origin Of Evil ★★★	£1.9M	£1.9M	2

US TOP 10



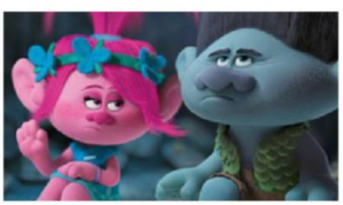
Pos	FILM	THIS MONTH	SINCE RELEASE	WEEKS OUT
1	The Girl On The Train ★★★	$65.9M	$65.9M	4
2	The Accountant ★★★	$61.3M	$61.3M	3
3	Boo! A Madea Halloween N/A	$52M	$52M	2
4	Miss Peregrine's Home... ★★★★	$51.4M	$79.9M	5
5	Jack Reacher: Never Go Back ★★★★	$39.7M	$39.7M	2
6	Deepwater Horizon ★★★	$37.8M	$58.4M	5
7	The Magnificent Seven ★★★★	$29.6M	$91.2M	6
8	Storks ★★★	$29.4M	$68.2M	6
9	Ouija: Origin Of Evil ★★★	$24.6M	$24.6M	2
10	Kevin Hart: What Now? N/A	$21.2M	$21.2M	3



INFERNO
Not-so-happy days for Ron Howard, notching up his fourth US box-office under-performer in a row. On the bright side, he at least got rock bottom out of the way first with *The Dilemma*.

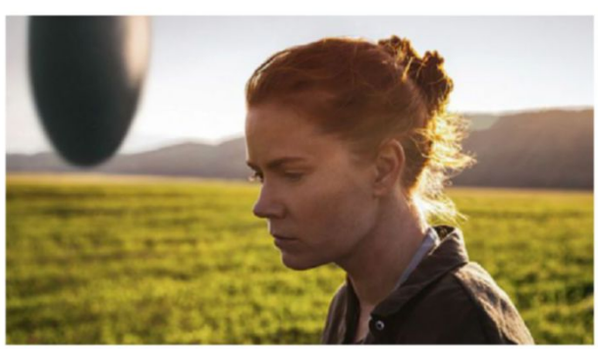


OUIJA: ORIGIN OF EVIL
Not only better received than 2014's *Ouija*, but the best-reviewed movie based on a Hasbro toy. Not to rain on anyone's parade, but as low bars go, we're in the realm of limbo-dancing.



TROLLS
Topped the UK chart in the same week that *I, Daniel Blake* also posted a strong debut. One of these films left several adults despairing at the state of the world. The other was *I, Daniel Blake*.

STILL OUT, STILL GOOD... OUR PICK OF THE MOVIES OUT NOW



ARRIVAL ★★★★★

"An intelligent, eloquent and stirring sci-fi that grips from start to finish, *Arrival* is up there with the year's best. Amy Adams is, as ever, superb."



NOCTURNAL ANIMALS ★★★★☆

"Fashion designer Tom Ford exceeds set procedure in his sumptuous, suspenseful second film... Amy Adams taps deeply into the aching neurosis behind the poise."



THE INNOCENTS ★★★★☆

"This WW2 drama is directed with painterly restraint by Anne Fontaine, who lets powerful performances by Agata Buzek and Agata Kulesza power the story."



RICHARD LINKLATER: DREAM IS DESTINY ★★★★☆

"Lewis Black and Karen Bernstein's doc is an inspiring rallying cry for small-town dreamers everywhere."

COMING SOON THE BIG HITTERS ON THE CARDS FOR NEXT MONTH...



ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

OUT 15 DECEMBER

Felicity Jones was wasted in Dan Brown threequel downer *Inferno*, so let's hope she's a rebel with a better cause when Gareth Edwards' saga prequel docks. If you've been hiding in a wampa cave on Hoth and don't know, the plot tells how the Rebels stole the Death Star plans. And, going by recent character posters, got face tats of them after celebrating with Jones' Jyn Erso. Will Tarkin appear, as rumoured, cracking off-colour jokes about Outer Rims? Will Mads Mikkelsen's Galen Erso show Vader some proper dad-skills? Save the dream in a galaxy quite close by... just over on page 60, in fact.



PASSENGERS
OUT 21 DECEMBER

Having survived the X-Men's *Apocalypse*, Jennifer Lawrence heads for distant skies in the Jon Spaihts-scripted *Titanic*-in-space romance. The trailer gleams and Chris Pratt glows, leaving one big question: will J-Law make room for C-Pratt on her space-raft? Moonwalk to page 20 for more.



ASSASSIN'S CREED
OUT 6 JANUARY

Michael Fassbender swings into action after the emo-weather of *The Light Between Oceans*. Videogame adaps can land awkwardly, but this one has an exciting director in Justin Kurzel, plus enough leaps off tall buildings to make vertigo porn a thing. Trace the bloodline back to *TF251*'s cover story.



LA LA LAND
OUT 13 JANUARY

After their "Swayze moment" in *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling enjoy yet more flirty dancing in Damien *Whiplash* Chazelle's old-school musical romance. Pity they're just so rough on the eyes, but Chazelle's vitamin-burst images compensate. Be dazzled on page 80.

MISSION Statement

A year after The Force Awakens, the franchise gets an even bolder refresh with Rogue One: A Star Wars Story. Director Gareth Edwards and his stars explain why their gritty, risky war film is truly set to stand alone...

WORDS MATTHEW LEYLAND



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SHOOTING STARS Gareth Edwards on set, giving direction to Felicity Jones.

It is a period of *Civil War*… As in, you know, Cap versus Iron Man, big airport barney, new Spidey and so on. As things stand, Marvel's *Captain America* threequel is the biggest hit of 2016, grossing more than $1.15bn at the box office. The only movie with any hope of topping that tally is *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, which steals into cinemas mid-December. If any brand can beat Marvel, it's *Star Wars*, right? And yet… *Rogue One* is a new type of *Star Wars* movie. Stand-alone. Sans Skywalkers. Edgy. Experimental. This isn't your daddy's *Star Wars*. On second thoughts, it sort of is. Clearly, we need to unpack this a bit more…

"I owe my career to George Lucas," says Gareth Edwards, a life-long enthusiast who's now committed the ultimate act of *Star Wars* fandom: he's directed a *Star Wars* movie. Being such a die-hard, it's little wonder Edwards (*Monsters*, 2014's *Godzilla*) describes meeting Lucas during pre-production on *Rogue One* as "probably my most nervous moment". The new movie is a pumped-up prelude to the one that started it all, 1977's *Star Wars* (as it was simply known back then). Or rather, it's a filmic fleshing-out of the opening crawl: "Rebel spaceships, striking from a hidden base, have won their first victory against the evil Galactic Empire. During the battle, Rebel spies managed to steal secret plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the Death Star…" (that's the spoilers out of the way, then). Chronologically, *A New Hope* follows so hotly on *Rogue One*'s heels that the latter needs to exercise a strict level of consistency: narratively, tonally, visually. In other words, give major props to King George.

"[*Lucas*] is *Star Wars* more than anyone else will ever be," states Edwards, sitting comfortably in a quiet corner of London's Corinthia Hotel. "He's the reason it all exists. Not just slightly, but completely. So the idea of him visiting was… I don't know, it felt like we were building a church and God came down to check up on us." Warmly reminiscing about the visit several months after the fact (it's late summer and he's near the end of editing),

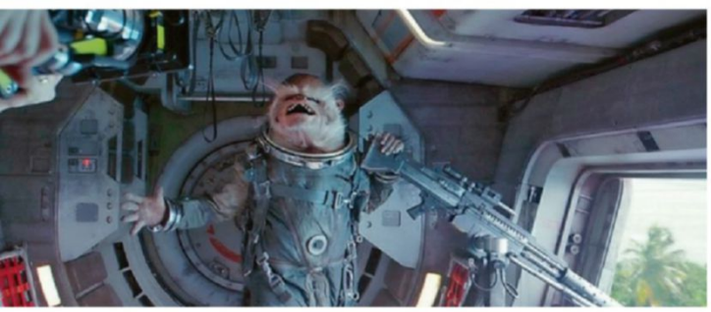






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Edwards offers an anecdote that could be titled 'George's Helmet'. (Bear with us.)

"Whatever he liked was pretty much guaranteed to be in the film," he says of Lucas' tour of the design department. "For example, there was a helmet we loved but didn't know where to put it; there wasn't really an opportunity to use it. But when [*Lucas*] walked past it and went 'That's cool, I like that', we looked at each other like, 'OK, we have to put that in the film!'"

Rogue One may doff its, um, helmet to Lucas' vision, but don't expect an endless trail of Easter eggs. Edwards notes how, in pre-production, he felt "like a kid in a candy store", before dialling things down. "The people at Lucasfilm patiently let you get that out of your system. Because initially, I think every moviemaker wants to put everything from *Star Wars* in every movie, then slowly realises that that's silly and doesn't work; it makes the universe small." *Rogue One* is very much intended to take the saga into – to quote a wise Jedi – a larger world. On the one hand, you can expect a certain amount of '70s stylings: in a word, sideburns ("Some people came with sideburns, and some were put on," reveals Edwards). On the other, the filmmakers are mindful of moving with the times. *Rogue One*, says Edwards, features an "ethnic diversity that you want in any sort of film that represents humanity" – a diversity that wasn't too common in mainstream cinema circa 1977.

Hence a core cast with a distinctly international vibe, including Diego Luna, Riz Ahmed, Donnie Yen, Jiang Wen, Forest Whitaker and Alan Tudyk. And fronting the mission that will lead to Imperial blueprints being stored in R2's bonce is Felicity Jones, who plays Rebel-with-a-past Jyn Erso. She's appeared in tentpoles before – *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*, the recent *Inferno* – but this is the star's highest-profile gig to date. So what drove Jones to Jyn? "I love her natural authority," she says. "She's very spirited." Spirited in a non-law-abiding sense: as the first teaser informed us, Jyn's notched up an impressive rap sheet: "Forgery of Imperial documents, possession of stolen property, aggravated assault, resisting arrest…" Thankfully, the only act of rebellion Jones is committing today is against the weather – it's 30 degrees outside but she's wearing a chunky jumper, which does admittedly make sense given the hotel's Hoth-like air conditioning.

"She's a bit different, I hope, to the other heroes in *Star Wars*," offers

> **'Initially every moviemaker wants to put everything from Star Wars in every movie, then slowly realises that doesn't work'**
>
> **GARETH EDWARDS**

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Edwards. "In that she's not predestined to be the saviour of the galaxy. It wasn't written in the stars that this was who she was going to be. She was supposed to have a different life and then something comes along that shatters it, and she's forced to be this fighter." Edwards and his screenwriters – Chris Weitz (*About A Boy*) and Tony Gilroy (the *Bourne* movies) – strove to make Jyn's gender irrelevant. "When we knew we were going to have a female role, we had to stop and try to forget that, and write it as if it were a guy." He refers to a classic precedent: "One of my favourite heroines in film, let alone science fiction, is Ripley in *Alien*," he says. "The story there is that they wrote it for a guy, then at the last minute it was changed [*when they cast*] Sigourney Weaver."

Jones also cites Ripley as a touchstone – she rewatched *Alien* for reference, as well as war-movie staples such as *Apocalypse Now* and *Saving Private Ryan*, to get a steer on the "texture and attention to detail that Gareth wanted" in *Rogue One*. The end result, she says, will give *Star Wars* fans a (pleasant) jolt. "I think they'll be surprised by the humanity of the characters, but the reality of the way it's shot – a lot of it was handheld," she explains. "It feels very different from any of the *Star Wars* movies that have gone before."

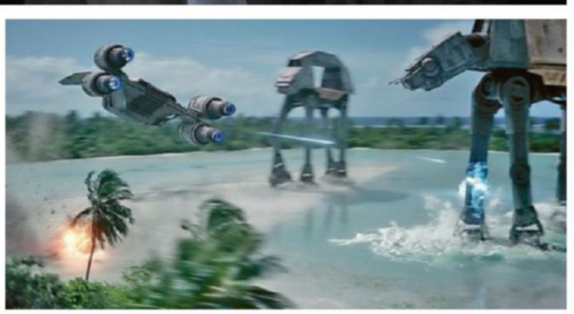
For one thing, it's not Force-focused. *Rogue One* is set during a particular lowpoint for lightsaber-fanciers, with the Jedi either dead or in exile. But their influence lingers, whether in the beliefs of blind warrior Chirrut Îmwe (Donnie Yen) or in Jyn's mien. "We wanted her to have a sense of what's so beautiful about *Star Wars* – the Jedi philosophy," reveals Jones. "We wanted a sense of that spirituality, of that humanity, alongside her strength and physical ability."

So how does Jyn fit in – or not – with her other *Rogue* compadres? Are we getting into spoiler territory? "Yeah, it's all top secret," laughs Jones. "But in true *Star Wars* fashion, it's science fiction, but it's also about relationships and connections – and missed connections." Safe to say that one of the things she's alluding to is a theme that resonates through the whole saga: dads. As revealed in later trailers, Jyn's father, Galen Erso (Mads Mikkelsen) is the one who alerts the Rebels that a major weapons test is imminent. "How can I put it?" grins Mikkelsen when pressed for intel on Galen. "He has a very important role. He's not the main character, obviously, but a lot of the story spins around who he is and what he does." *TF*'s next query – how does Galen compare with other *Star Wars* fathers? – earns us another knowing smile. "Let's just say he is as complex as a lot of them!"

> **'We wanted a sense of that spiritualiaty alongside her strength and physical ability'**
>
> **FELICITY JONES**







ROGUE WARRIOR
Ben Mendelsohn (below) plays big bad Orson Krennic, while Donnie Yen (bottom left) is blind fighter Chirrut Îmwe.

Rogue One offers another parent-child pairing (from a certain point of view): Captain Cassian Andor and K-2SO. One's an intelligence officer; the other's a droid. A droid who used to work for the other side, until Andor rebooted him as a Rebel. With attitude. "K-2 doesn't have a filter," says Diego Luna, who plays Andor. "There were a few flaws in his reprogramming. So now he says everything that goes through his circuit. And sometimes that can be a big problem, to have someone telling you the truth all the time, which is what he does to Cassian." A problem for Cassian, but also an emotional entry point for viewers. "It's kind of like a father-son relationship in many ways, but they're also like an old couple. It's been a long time – everything means so much," explains Luna. "Like your aunt and uncle who argue all the time, but can just be together."

Putting it in more *Star Wars*-y terms, Alan Tudyk says that Cassian and K-2 have a bit of a Han Solo/Chewbacca thing going on. "You can tell that K-2 really cares for Cassian," says Tudyk, who performance-captured the ex-Imperial 'bot. "Cassian saved K-2 from a life of being a droid and servant to being a droid who's allowed to have a personality and be himself. He has his own point of view and expresses

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it quite frequently!" Attendees of this year's Star Wars Celebration event enjoyed a giggle at a scene snippet involving K-2 and a bag. With the film's tone seemingly on the sombre side, is comic relief the droid's primary function? "I think he's going to be... entertaining," Tudyk says carefully, wary that the term "funny character" evokes a certain floppy-eared fool from prequels past. "He's not solely comic relief, but there will be funny moments."

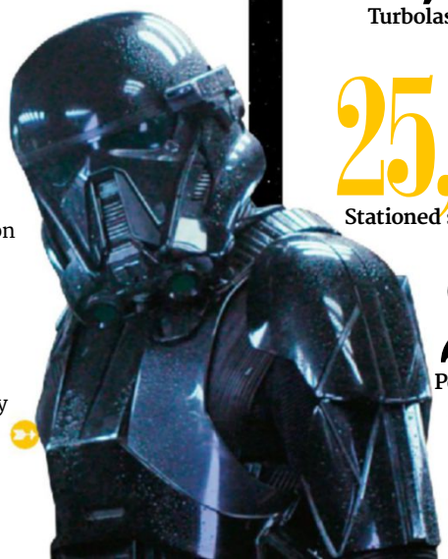
But enough about Jyn's father, or K-2's surrogate one. For many, *Rogue One*'s all-conquering USP is the return of Darth Vader, the biggest, baddest daddy in sci-fi. For a man who wheezed his last back in 1983's *Return Of The Jedi*, Darth hasn't done badly – a cameo in 2005's *Revenge Of The Sith*; semi-regular appearances on *Star Wars Rebels* (which, timeline-wise, slots between *Episode III* and *Rogue One*); there was even a duel with the Duracell bunny in a mid-'90s commercial. But this is his big live-action comeback, with James Earl Jones once again providing the voice of Vader. The Dark Lord isn't expected to have a large role, but he'll certainly have a large presence – not least thanks to Edwards' eagle eye for old-school detail.

As 'homework', the director took in a screening or two of a 4K restoration print of *A New Hope* laid on by Lucasfilm. "The thing that surprised me," he reveals, "that I hadn't noticed until we looked at it properly, is that Vader's eyeline is always higher than everyone else's in the room. Even if he's further away – which would normally make him smaller – they raise the camera up, to keep him highest." Edwards admits that, stylistically, "that's a weird thing to do", but found that whenever he didn't follow suit, Vader just didn't look right. So not for the first time, Darth will be heads above the other characters.

"He's enormous. I mean, Darth is really, really big," marvels Ben Mendelsohn, who plays principal baddie Director Orson Krennic. (Or to give him his full, unlovely title, The Director Of Advanced Weapons Research For The Imperial Military. In other words, he's the guy striving to give the Empire enough kaboom to destroy a whole planet.)

Though Mendelsohn is somewhat coy about whether he actually shares scenes with his black-robed Imperial colleague, he can verify that the version we'll see on screen is 100 per cent Vader. "[*When you see him*], you know it's the real Darth Vader, right there," he says. "Darth Vader is Darth Vader. He's singular. He stands all on his own." Jones too will neither confirm or deny if Jyn goes toe-to-toe with Vader,

BACK IN BLACK
(below) You can't miss the new variant on stormtroopers – the menacing-looking death troopers.



DEATH STAR BY NUMBERS

120
Kilometres in width (and length).

1tn+
Cost of construction in galactic credits.

768
Tractor beam emplacements.

1
Superlaser.

2 METRES
Width of thermal exhaust port (which Luke fired proton torpedoes into to destroy the first Death Star).

357
Internal levels.

15,000
Turbolaser batteries.

25,984
Stationed stormtroopers.

2m
Personnel of varying combat eligibility.

but does relate a memorable encounter: "It's very frightening seeing him in the corridor as you're walking to set! You jump out of your skin a little bit…"

Still, the Emperor's right-hand man isn't the biggest *SW* icon resurrected in *Rogue One* – that would be the battle station at the centre of it all. Did the 'kid-in-a-candy-store' bug bite Edwards especially hard when it came to the Death Star? Was he tempted to go wild and show us every nook, cranny and executive washroom? "The interiors are pretty much what's been established," Edwards says. "We didn't have as many scenes inside the Death Star as *A New Hope* did, so it felt like, if we're only going to do a few things, let them be classic sets, legacy sets."

match Lucas' original, but with a few modifications. "The thing we did differently was put a giant screen up there," says Edwards. "The things they're looking at, the information, was really up there, illuminating the room."

"When you go on set and see that? Yeah, you geek out," says Mendelsohn, a life-long *Star Wars* fan. Despite rocking the coolest cape since Lando ("You can't put on a costume like that and not feel good about it"), what really sent the actor into a state of nerd-vana was the vintage graphics. "They're really like mid-to-late '70s," he raves, wowed by the attention to retro-future detail. "Just being able to look and watch what the different programmes did… that was like, 'Aw, man!'"

'It's very frightening seeing Darth in the corridor as you're walking to set! You jump out of your skin a little bit…'

FELICITY JONES

As part of more enviable 'homework', Edwards got to have a nosey at some of the *New Hope* dailies "and see things that never got shown… there's one scene that's not in the finished movie where they walk down a corridor and then go off in a different direction." If Obi-Wan were around, he'd be feeling millions of voices crying out in geekgasmic awe right now. But never mind skimming dailies – what's it like actually standing on the Death Star? "Weird!" Edwards replies. Such key sets as the control room were built to

Another on-set highpoint: meeting Luke Skywalker. George Lucas wasn't the only *Star Wars* legend to visit the production; Mark Hamill also popped in to say hello. "He came along quite early on," recalls Felicity Jones. "He was a really good presence. He was calming everybody down because obviously everyone was very nervous… it's such a big franchise!" But Hamill, of course, was there at the start, before it even became a franchise. "The thing that delights me most about the first one," says Mendelsohn, who also met Hamill,



VADER EVOLVED

How the Dark Lord's look changed over seven films (and three TV shows).



THE PHANTOM MENACE

Clad in a potato sack, floppy-haired moppet Jake Lloyd hardly cuts an imposing figure as the future Lord Vader. Still more intimidating than Jar Jar Binks though.



ATTACK OF THE CLONES

Anakin behaves like an impetuous teen in *Clones*, but can you blame him when he's forced to wear ill-fitting Jedi robes and sport a distressing rat tail… sorry, Padawan braid.



THE CLONE WARS, 2003

Genndy Tartakovsky's *Clone Wars* is where Anakin comes of age, bulking up and picking up a badass scar over his right eye between the second and third seasons.



THE CLONE WARS, 2008

The CG *Clone Wars* series keeps Tartakovsky's flourishes: the costume, the angular features and the perma-frown, but gives Anakin the square jaw the hero of *The Clone Wars* requires.





REVENGE OF THE SITH (ANAKIN)
With Anakin's fall imminent, the visual clues are as heavy-handed as Lucas' script – unkempt hair, jet black clothes and, eventually, yellow pupils when he turns to the Dark Side.



REVENGE OF THE SITH (VADER)
Vader's first suit (chronologically) is also his most pristine, with a shoulder piece that dominates his jet black top half. The chest panel has an extra red button for, er, some reason.



REBELS
Like many of the characters in *Rebels*, Vader's given a makeover in keeping with Ralph McQuarrie's original concept art, including a slightly more triangular and narrow helmet.



ROGUE ONE
Almost entirely faithful to *A New Hope*, *Rogue One* restores the red lenses in Vader's helmet and replaces that random red button with the original white. The codpiece has also grown, weirdly.



A NEW HOPE
The original, and best. The shoulder piece is hidden under Vader's cloak/robes and the helmet, crafted by hand, is asymmetrical with a more pronounced (and menacing) widow's peak.



THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
The control panel on Vader's chest gets an overhaul, but it's the helmet that sees the biggest changes: less angular 'cheek bones', more rounded eyes and a missing widow's peak.



RETURN OF THE JEDI
Costume changes are minor in *Jedi*, the biggest being an exposed cape chain, but it's here that we see old man Anakin (Sebastian Shaw) in all his prune-like glory. Not so scary now, eh? *JF*



Q&A

FOREST WHITAKER

THE OSCAR-WINNING STAR TALKS ARMOUR, VADER AND EXTREME REBELLING...

What can you tell us about your character Saw Gerrara?
He's a war veteran, a freedom fighter who, in a way, is considered by the other Rebels to be an extremist because of the way he starts to conduct his campaign. I think he's recognised that in order to stop what he considers to be inevitable – the creation of a machine that will destroy the universe – he has to make certain compromises.

Saw previously appeared in *The Clone Wars* TV series... how's he changed?
In *The Clone Wars* you see him when he's younger and kind of a self-appointed leader. As the war goes on he becomes more hardened. You saw him training with Anakin and Obi-Wan as part of a sanctioned force. In *Rogue One* he's like, not even accepted by the other Rebels; he's cordoned off with his own fighters, doing whatever's necessary to win the war.

You're wearing some serious armour in this film...
The designers were amazing. The first time I put it on I was like, "OK. *This* is who he is." The costume's quite unusual – it's like armour but also like a living apparatus.

Sounds a little like Darth Vader...
Well, Saw knew Anakin so clearly there's a connection there. My character is fighting for good, but he lives in a grey area; hopefully he won't fall over into the Dark Side! ***ML***

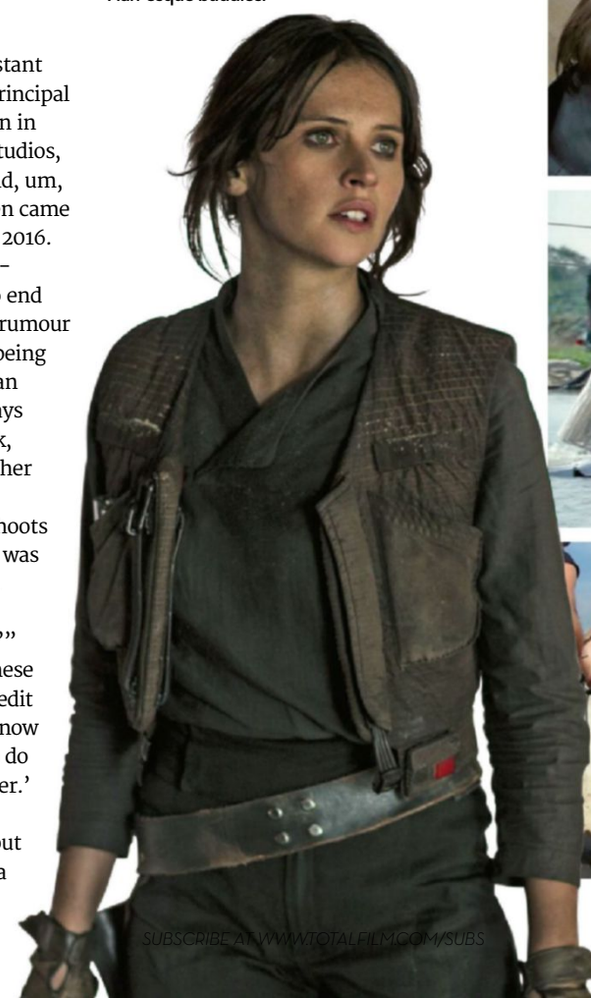


"was that, when they were making it, they didn't really think anything of it, really. They were making this funny little science-fiction film on a fairly low budget, fairly hurriedly, and had probably thought, 'whatever!'"

A far cry from today, when anything *Star Wars* generates instant headlines. Not least reshoots. Principal photography on *Rogue One* began in August 2015, taking in Elstree Studios, the Maldives, Jordan, Iceland and, um, Canary Wharf Tube Station. Then came a period of reshoots in summer 2016. Although the reshoots were pre-scheduled, the news sparked no end of internet tattle, including the rumour that nearly half the movie was being redone. "There's nothing you can do about what's said online," says Edwards. "Sometimes you think, 'Where did that come from?' Other times you go, 'Yeah, but that's normal.'" He confirms that reshoots were always part of the plan (as was the case with *The Force Awakens*). "We'd joke about it as we were filming – 'I'll see you next year!'" The idea is that you ringfence these resources, and then you go and edit the film. And then you go, 'OK, now we know what we know, we can do these following things a bit better.' So that's what happened."

Edwards is philosophical about the online fuss. "*Star Wars* gets a

DOUBLE-ACT
(above) Cassian (Diego Luna) and K-2SO (Alan Tudyk) are Chewie and Han-esque buddies.



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lot of attention – more than other films," he reasons. "I mean, it's part of the privilege of doing *Star Wars*. And I'm absolutely fine with it. I know I've got the luckiest job in the world. So some bad internet stories are a small price to pay." In terms of what was actually reshot, Edwards stresses that there were no great overhauls involved. "Nothing got reinvented," he says. "We just tweaked a bunch of things throughout the whole movie, rather than a specific section. The theory that the tone was really affected [*by the reshoots*] is not the case whatsoever."

Edwards is alluding to the discredited rumour that Disney wanted the movie to be nudged in a more family-friendly direction. *Rogue One* is, and always has been, a war film – and as such, "I think it'd be fair to say the tone is a little bit more adult than some of the other films," says the director.

> **'You see familiar characters, but the feel of the film is very different. People have said it's grittier. It feels realer'**
>
> **ALAN TUDYK**

His ambition to make a more grown-up fantasy is rooted, perhaps, in the cinema wishlist of his youth. "I remember when I was like 10, wanting to see films like *Rambo* and *Alien*," he recalls. As if to calm any worried parents of *Star Wars* fankids, he quickly adds: "[Rogue One] isn't like those. It's not that level. I do think it'll appeal to kids, but kids who like films that are a little bit more adult."

Of course, in *Star Wars* terms, *A New Hope* is the only episode *Rogue One* begs comparison with, isn't it? No – there is another. "When we're saying 'What's the tone of this film? What do we want to match it to?', the obvious *Star Wars* reference would be *The Empire Strikes Back*," says Edwards. "[Empire] is brooding and it's serious, but it's got lightness in it. If you've got the same tone throughout an entire movie, it doesn't work. You need the contrast. *Empire* was definitely the benchmark for what the perfect balance would be."

Speaking of 'benchmarks', it's not even a year since *The Force Awakens* notched up several, including a series-best worldwide take of $2.068bn. While it's likely *Rogue One* will give *Civil War* a run for its money, it's not expected to trouble *TFA*'s standing as the third-highest-grossing movie of all time (and that's according to Disney chief Bob Iger). But whatever the scale of its mega-success, it will undoubtedly broaden the franchise's horizons, add fresh shades to its palette (and launch a new revenue stream: next up, the *Han Solo* movie).

If the other *Star Wars* movies are about exceptional individuals answering a higher calling – Anakin, Luke, Rey – this one is a bit more boots on the ground. "I think what's powerful about this film is that it talks to us honestly," reckons Diego Luna. "It's about ordinary people doing extraordinary things; it's about how you don't need supernatural powers to actually do something." Fans don't need to worry that *Star Wars* has gone all Dogme on them, but should be braced for a few stylistic shake-ups. "You see familiar characters, like stormtroopers, but the feel of the film is very different," explains Alan Tudyk. "People have said it's grittier. It feels realer. It's more up close and in your face than other films in the series have been. Do I think people are ready for this kind of *Star Wars* movie? Absolutely."

Ben Mendelsohn sets the bar even higher, promising something unprecedented. "It's fair to say it's unlike just about any film that you can think of. You'll understand why I've said that when you've seen it," he teases. "I think *Rogue One* is an incredibly gutsy movie. And it's going to delight fans old and new." At least one *Star Wars* fan who's happy with the finished product is Edwards himself. Shortly before *TF*'s chat with him ends, a PR hands the director a brand-new box of six-inch figures – a *Rogue*'s gallery of characters from Darth to K-2. "I'm really proud of what we did," he beams, inspecting the box from all angles. "We were very ambitious and didn't want it to be diet *Star Wars*, but proper full-on. We went for broke."

ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY OPENS ON 15 DECEMBER.

THE Great British TAKE OFF

After starring in indies like Shifty and Four Lions, Riz Ahmed won acclaim in HBO's The Night Of and is now jumping into hyperspace in Rogue One. Total Film meets the Brit multihyphenate to talk Star Wars, rapping and racial profiling.

WORDS MATT MAYTUM **PORTRAIT** RYAN PFLUGER

"This is my first studio film, man," grins Riz Ahmed. "This is the first time I've done a film this big, and there probably aren't films that get any bigger, so I'm definitely in at the deep end – just the scale of it is a bit dizzying." *Total Film* is catching up with the 33-year-old Brit at the Corinthia Hotel in London, where's he's on press duties for *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* (he wasn't exaggerating when he said films don't get any bigger than this).

If he's feeling any pressure, he's certainly not showing it, as he chats away between mouthfuls of salad forked from a plastic pot. "Do you mind if I just finish this off?" he asks, before continuing his lunch. He's dressed smartly in a ribbed jumper and black trousers, but the blockbuster lifestyle doesn't seem to have gone to his head just yet. His tipple of choice this afternoon? A Lemsip. He's not ill, but he calls it "precautionary", given all the travelling he's been doing of late. His *Rogue One* tour might be kicking off now, but when we meet he's just been in the States promoting his new album (as Riz MC, he's one half of hip-hop duo Swet Shop Boys). HBO hit *The Night Of* has also raised his profile in the US.

It's a typically busy period for the actor/rapper, who has been working solidly since his breakout turn in Michael Winterbottom's docudrama *The Road To Guantánamo*, following it up with the likes of *Shifty*, *Four Lions*, *Ill Manors* and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Just a few months ago he was playing compromised tech guru Aaron Kalloor in *Jason Bourne*. If those seem like thoughtful, politically charged picks, that won't be unintentional. Ahmed has never shied away from addressing his experience as a Brit of Pakistani heritage; indeed, the Swet Shop Boys LP addresses such issues (including 'random' racial profiling at airports)

RYAN PFLUGER/AUGUST

RIZ AHMED



head-on. He also recently penned an essay called 'Typecast As A Terrorist' for anthology book *The Good Immigrant*. On social media, he frequently speaks up about these experiences, which often occur at airports (it seems being on the cover of the plane's in-flight magazine doesn't give you a pass from being searched before boarding).

Star Wars, though, taps into something more personal than political. "I wasn't a massive fan in the way that some people can be properly devoted to it," Ahmed admits. "But it's my first memory of watching a film… It just set off my imagination. Me and my brother would make up names for these films like *Battle Walker* and *Star-Man*, and run around the house acting out these action sci-fi films." His wide, dark-brown eyes brim with excitement at the memory. It's clearly important to him. The final *Rogue One* trailer dropped the day before the Swet Shop Boys album, and Ahmed told his followers that the two "may seem galaxies apart but both are about remixing a precious inheritance for a new generation".

'To me, that's the point of stories – putting yourself in someone else's shoes'
RIZ AHMED

So, in costume and on-set of *Star Wars* standalone prequel *Rogue One*, did Ahmed feel like a big kid, or is it just work when you're there? "It's a bit of both," he grins. "Some of it feels like being in a theme park – particularly when they've built things. It just feels so cool. It's so impressive, the level of detail and the hard work they've put into creating that world. It's really tangible. It makes things so real that it makes your job easier as an actor. You do have those moments where you're a fan who happens to be on set."

There's something abnormally 'normal' about Ahmed when you meet him – you could be chatting to someone you went to school with. And if *Rogue* feels like the scrappy younger sibling next to the *Episodes*, his character reflects that. He's no Jedi. "He's an Imperial cargo pilot from the planet Jedha," he explains. "It's an occupied planet. He's just an average Joe trying to do a job. Circumstances mean he has to make a decision about certain things. Hopefully he's a relatable character, because he's not like anyone's grandson or kid, like a lot of *Star Wars* characters. He's just a guy trying to survive."

He's the one who gives the Death-Star-blueprint-seeking Rebels' ship the call sign of the film's title, and he has a pretty nifty moniker himself: Bodhi Rook. "Maybe when they were naming the character, it might have been relevant that the name Bodhi means 'awakening'. Maybe." Not that Ahmed was going to question it. "I just ran with it. I didn't want to ask any questions because I liked it. I just thought, 'Leave that alone, that's good.'"

In his 'Typecast As A Terrorist' essay, Ahmed writes about the stages



FLYING HIGH
Ahmed plays former Imperial pilot Bodhi Rook in the upcoming *Rogue One*.

of roles minority actors are offered, leading to "the Promised Land, where you play a character whose story is not intrinsically linked to his race". So does *Rogue One*, which exists in the *Star Wars* universe far, far away from the politics of Earth, represent that Promised Land? "I guess so, in a way," he says, pausing to reflect. "We're only all truly at the Promised Land if those opportunities exist for everyone, right? But certainly it feels like a step forward when you've got John Boyega and Diego Luna in these films, and the lead character is Daisy Ridley and Felicity Jones, as opposed to men. That feels like a step forward for our collective culture in terms of how widely we want to cast the net of our collective empathy – which can only be a cool thing. To me, that's the point of stories – putting yourself in someone else's shoes."







TOP
Ahmed won acclaim for his turn as a student accused of murder in HBO's *The Night Of*.

ABOVE
As an inept terrorist in *Four Lions* (left) and playing the eponymous drug dealer in *Shifty* (right).

Representation has perhaps been better catered to within the sci-fi genre, than, say, fantasy. "I think fantasy has been quite disappointing and conservative, often," adds Ahmed. "You can have people giving birth to dragons, but you can't have a black elf. There's often a kind of failure of the imagination there. And perhaps that's more to do with the fact that fantasy speaks to a kind of fictional nostalgia, whereas sci-fi is about imagining what's possible."

Ahmed himself is no stranger to reaching beyond the realms of the possible. His relentless work ethic has seen him carve out a music career alongside his acting. The dual career has created what he describes as "a healthy tension", explaining, "It means you're not going to do a film for the sake of it, because you know it'll take the time out for music. And vice versa." He has also used advances in tech to his advantage, sending *Rogue One* director Gareth Edwards auditions from his iPhone ("I sent him, like, 12 auditions, like a psycho"), and simplifying the music-making process, doing the Swet Shop Boys album in just five days in his flat. He's also actively involved in generating film work for himself, having previously written and directed a short.

"It's a combination of things," he says, when we ask what he's writing now. "One is a kind of TV series I'm co-writing. One is a TV series in the UK that I'm writing and directing. One's a feature that I'd like to write and direct – it's a kind of comedy. And there are a couple of projects where I've got more of a producer role, that I also act in. I'm working on an adaptation of *Hamlet*, for example, and things like that. It's a mixed bag, I hope."



The rise of iPhone auditions means that, even as Ahmed's career enters a new phase, he's unlikely to leave Britain for the US. "You don't have to be there for work," he says. "The only reason to go there is if you like healthy food, which…" He pauses, inspects his salad. "I don't know, let's see. The jury's still out." Even on a large-scale production such as *Rogue One*, Ahmed recognised a number of faces from his indie background. "One thing that's interesting is you've got a lot of the same crew from those old films that I did," he beams. "For real! A lot of the big American films [*shoot*] in the UK now. The guy who was doing sound was the same guy who did sound on *The Road To Guantánamo*. The focus puller is the guy who shot my short film. So actually, there's been a lot of British independent film talent that seems to have graduated into those big films they do out of Pinewood."

The film industry in the UK has been booming in recent years – several huge productions have filmed on British sound stages. How the recent EU referendum will impact that prosperity remains to be seen. "It's hard to imagine that Brexit won't have a negative impact on all of our trade, quite frankly," says Ahmed. "I think that's what everyone who's ever been qualified to talk about this subject has said. I think we can put our heads in the sand and try to think it'll go another way. But yeah, I think our whole economy is probably going to take a hit. I think that's sad, because I don't think any of us want that."

Not that any sort of economic shift is likely to prevent Ahmed from doing what he wants to do creatively, as he becomes more involved behind the scenes. "I really enjoyed writing and directing my short film," he says. "I think that creatively, that's something I've always wanted to do and have been encouraged to do by directors and other people I've worked with. That's something I'd definitely like to try and learn and develop in some way." And in terms of the acting roles, diversity is likely to continue to be the name of the game. "I feel really lucky – touch wood – I've got to be in lots of different kinds of films of different sizes that have found different kinds of audiences. So I'd love that to just continue…"

ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY OPENS ON 15 DECEMBER.

20 Greatest Death Star MOMENTS

It's the vast spherical space station that's become emblematic of all things Star Wars, and the Death Star is at the heart of Rogue One. Total Film runs down the greatest on-screen incidents featuring the ultimate Imperial weapon.

WORDS SAM ASHURST, PAUL BRADSHAW, MATT LOOKER, JAMES MOTTRAM, NEIL SMITH





EMPEROR'S ENTRANCE

Return Of The Jedi has warned us how unforgiving Vader's boss is compared to Darth, so we're as worried as the lined-up stormtroopers when Palpatine steps off his shuttle, flanked by his Royal Guard. Then Vader kneels... and we *really* get scared.



DESTROYING ALDERAAN

Princess Leia comes to regret her "foul stench" remark after Governor Tarkin decides to test the Death Star's destructive power on her home planet of Alderaan. Peter Cushing's boots hurt so much that he did the whole *A New Hope* scene in slippers.



PREQUEL CAMEOS

Those struggling to reconcile the prequels with their beloved originals whooped at the sight of Death Star blueprints in *Attack Of The Clones*. And its half-formed appearance at the end of *Revenge Of The Sith* proved the most effective way to bridge the trilogies.



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Getting trashed

"What an incredible smell you've discovered," chides Han to Princess Leia in *A New Hope*, as they take in their new surroundings in the Death Star's trash compactor after narrowly escaping stormtrooper fire. An offensive pong is the least of their worries, as Luke is pulled underwater by a one-eyed dianoga looking for lunch. Then, with groaning sounds echoing around the chamber, comes the killer moment: the walls start closing in. Even in crisis, Han can't resist a gag: "One thing's for sure, we're all gonna be a lot thinner."



Han chases the stormtroopers

Forget the Greedo shootout and the "I love you" line; nothing sums up Han's badass space pirate spirit better than his attempt to take on an entire corridor of stormtroopers by running and shouting at them in *A New Hope*. Better still – the expression on his face when he realises it's not going to work. Let's just pretend that hanger full of extra Special Edition baddies isn't there though…



ROGUE ONE TEASED

Star Wars Celebration 2015 saw Gareth Evans present the first *Rogue One* teaser. The camera slowly moves from a forest canyon to a giant moon. But that's no moon... The footage was never released to the public, so remains the preserve of hardcore fans.



"THAT'S NO MOON"

Our heroes' first glimpse of the Death Star in *A New Hope*, as the Millennium Falcon emerges from hyperspace to find Alderaan a pile of rubble and a "small moon" looking very guilty. Ben Kenobi delivers the ominous news: it's a space station. Bugger.

Vader choking Motti

You might not know his name, but Conan Antonio Motti (Richard LeParmentier) is one of the most important people in the *Star Wars* franchise. Not only does he inspire Vader's first demonstration of Force power in *A New Hope*, he's the recipient of one of the most quoted lines: "I find your lack of faith disturbing." Life lesson – never insult someone's religion during a Death Star debate.





"YOU REBEL SCUM!"

In *Return Of The Jedi*, Han sneaks into the Death Star II shield generator via the back door after tapping a scout trooper on the shoulder and leading him into a trap. What Solo doesn't know is that he himself is walking into an Imperial ambush.



"IT'S A TRAP!"

During the Rebels' DSII assault in *Jedi*, Admiral Ackbar barks this brief warning after spotting the Empire has the upper hand. In just three screen-time seconds, Ackbar instantly became meme-canonised, travelling from playground catchphrase to internet immortality.



Obi-Wan's death

"You can't win, Darth," Obi-Wan warns Vader as they lock lightsabers in *A New Hope*. "If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine." But then he lets Vader do exactly that, creating just the distraction Luke needs to make his escape. George Lucas was in two minds about whether Kenobi should perish, to Alec Guinness' annoyance. "Irritated by Lucas saying he hadn't made up his mind whether to kill off my part or not," he wrote in his diary. "A bit late for such decisions."



Flying through Death Star II

With the Death Star II's energy shield out of action, Lando Calrissian and his mouse-faced co-pilot Nien Nunb fly the Millennium Falcon into its innards and commence an exhilarating race towards its main reactor. "It was quite a complicated thing to get the camera in there, disassembling the set as we were moving through right before the camera hit it," explains *Jedi*'s FX supervisor Dennis Muren.

HEAD-BANGER

A New Hope's classic gaffe: a stormtrooper marches into a Death Star gantry office and bumps his head on the door-frame. But who was it? Actors Laurie Goode and Michael Leader both claim the incident, leaving the identity of this clumsy Imperial a mystery.





THE CHASM SWING

If you had to pick one scene from *A New Hope* to sum up Lucas' vision for an old-fashioned, Saturday matinee space-opera, it would be Luke and Leia's chasm swing – a moment of pure popcorn-spilling perfection. With reckless disregard for health and safety, Hamill and Fisher completed the swing in one take.

STARKILLER SIZE GUIDE

Imagine J.J. Abrams' dilemma when making *The Force Awakens*. How could he create a threat even more powerful than the Death Star? As Poe Dameron loads up a hologrammatic side-by-side comparison, Han Solo has the answer: "So, it's bigger..."



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Dark side deaths

The Death Star II plays host to the Empire's destruction in *Return Of The Jedi*, as both the Emperor and Darth Vader meet their makers. First it's the turn of the Emperor, hauled into the reactor core by Vader, who simply can't stand by and watch his master zap his own son with lightning bolts. Already wounded, this Herculean effort ushers his demise. As Luke removes Vader's helmet, knowing he will die, we see the pale-faced, scar-riddled Anakin underneath. "I've got to save you," says Luke. "You already have," he replies. Sob!

SUPER-DRAMATIC SUPER-LASER

The most powerful part of the Empire's ultimate weapon rightfully gets the most dramatic shot in the *Rogue One* trailer: shadows fall, revealing Imperial Star Destroyers in the wake of the Death Star being fitted with a brand spanking new super-laser.



DESTRUCTION OF DEATH STAR II

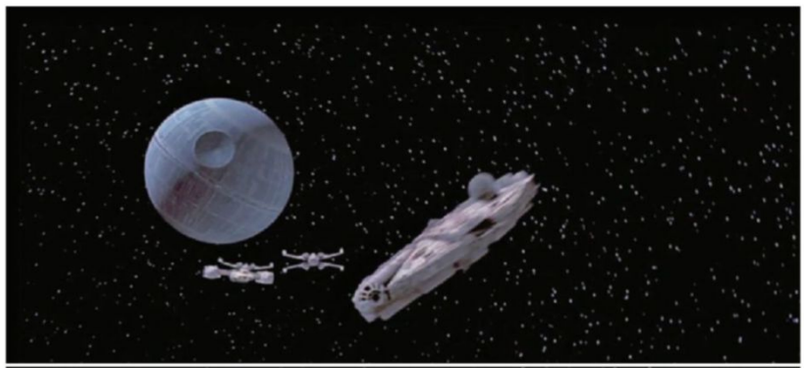
There's a beautiful irony in the destruction of the second Death Star at the end of *Return Of The Jedi* – lanced with the fiery wreckage of Vader's flagship Star Destroyer, it's almost as if the Rebel fleet force the Empire to slap themselves in the face.



Han on the intercom

After blasting Detention Block AA-23 to smithereens, Han Solo stalls for time by blaming the mayhem on "a slight weapons malfunction" and a "dangerous reactor leak". Asked to supply his "operating number" by an unseen controller, Han destroys the console with the legendary, "Boring conversation anyway!" Harrison Ford deliberately left this *A New Hope* scene unlearned in order to make his off-the-cuff gas-bagging sound spontaneous.







Death Star detonation

"You're all clear, kid!" whoops Han Solo after putting paid to the three Imperial fighters on Luke's tail. "Now let's blow this thing and go home!" Luke exhales and sends his last two missiles flying, shooting them into the exhaust port and consigning the Death Star to a fiery grave. Visual effects man Richard Edlund originally hoped to achieve the shot for *A New Hope* by blowing up an actual model in ILM's parking lot. Ultimately, though, time and money constraints led to an explosion being superimposed over a Death Star miniature.

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The stuff dreams are made of





Revitalising the Hollywood musical, **LA LA LAND** is hot favourite to sweep this year's awards season. Director Damien Chazelle and stars Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone tell Total Film how the movie no-one wanted to make danced to glory.

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM



Venice, 2016. *Total Film* is getting its first glimpse of *La La Land*, Damien Chazelle's much-anticipated follow up to his brilliant, Oscar-bestowed *Whiplash*. *La La Land* is the Italian film festival's curtain-raiser, and excitement is already high to see just what this 31-year-old wunderkind and his stars, Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, are going to bring to an old-school Hollywood musical. As the lights go down, the camera zeroes in on the freeway overlooking LA, gliding past cars caught in a morning traffic jam…

With the passengers springing from their vehicles to belt out a get-up-and-go anthem entitled 'Another Day Of Sun', the camera bobs and weaves around dozens of bonnet-flipping dancers – all in a seemingly unbroken take. *Birdman*, eat your heart out: that's how you open a movie. By the time this five-minute number is up, the Venice critics – a typically tough, seen-it-all-before crowd – are bursting into spontaneous applause, a sound that Chazelle is getting used to.

Just a few days later, Stone wins Venice's Volpi Cup for Best Actress.

STARRY-EYED Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone play lovers for the third time, after roles in *Crazy, Stupid, Love* and *Gangster Squad*.

Then *La La Land* claims the People's Choice Award at Toronto – following the likes of *12 Years A Slave*, *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Room*. Needless to say, the modest, unassuming Chazelle is made up. "Musicals – at their core – are a populist art form," he notes. "So I hoped and prayed there would be an audience for it, that people would be receptive.

> 'It's very informed by older movies'
> Damien Chazelle

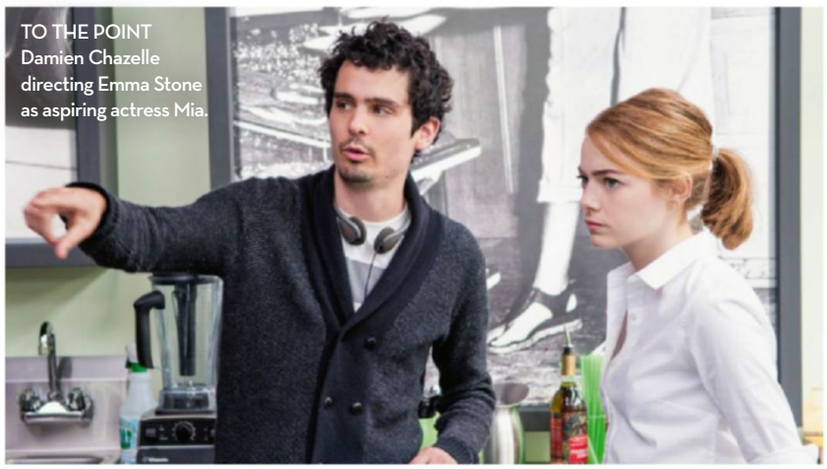
Even though I was told time and time again, the idea of a musical is not the most palatable for audiences today."

Whatever the suits say, films ranging from Oscar-winner *Chicago* to *Pitch Perfect* and *Into The Woods* have proved otherwise. "There's something beautiful about musicals," Chazelle adds. "The idea of song and dance expressing emotion is something that you don't get from other artforms." Even so, *La La Land* does something so many musicals fail to do: perfectly tailored for those who love the form, it's also designed for those that don't. "That was the hope – to reach over to the other aisle and win [*the*] sceptics over."

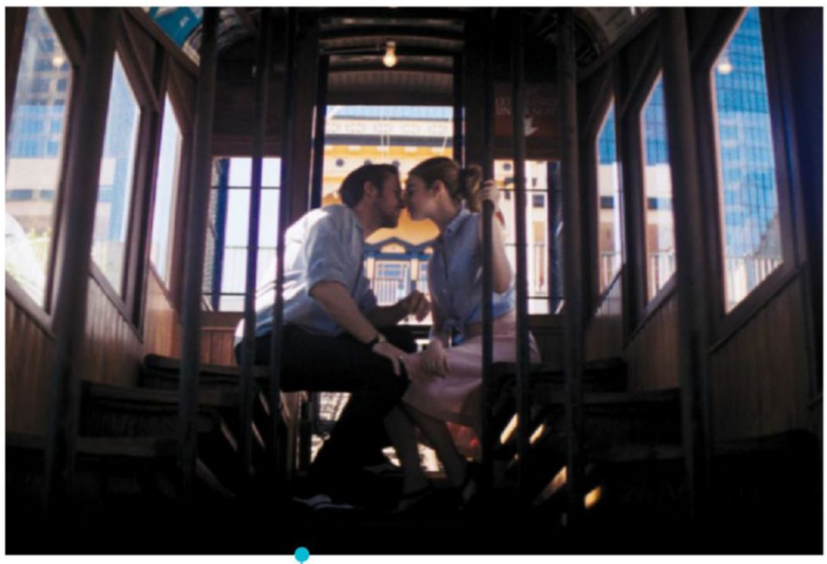
The story of a turbulent relationship between Stone's aspiring actress Mia and Gosling's jazz pianist Sebastian is as much about reality as romance. She wants to write plays and he wants to open a jazz club… but life dictates that while Mia must endure humiliating auditions, Sebastian is forced to play Christmas

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TO THE POINT
Damien Chazelle directing Emma Stone as aspiring actress Mia.



songs in a bar (run by *Whiplash*'s J.K. Simmons). And even when things start happening – not least Sebastian gigging in a band fronted by his old pal Keith (John Legend) – pressures of a different kind emerge.

Structured across the seasons, but told with intricate flashbacks and other narrative devices, it's not only a love-letter to Los Angeles but a bold and colourful tribute to the movie-musical, whether it's the work of such legendary practitioners as Vincente Minnelli and Stanley Donen ("Basically any Hollywood musical from the '30s through to the '50s") or the French musicals of the '60s, such as Jacques Demy's *The Young Girls Of Rochefort* and *The Umbrellas Of Cherbourg*.

"The hope," says Chazelle, was "to take certain conventions that we're familiar with from the genre but try to say something new with them, and also try to say something modern with it. Obviously, it's a movie that's very informed by older movies. I was really interested in what ways those older movies can comment on today. What ways they can be a prism through which we look at what it means to be a young artist, trying to make it in Los Angeles."

SONG AND DANCE
It's not all fun and games – well, maybe a bit.

It's a theme Chazelle can all too easily relate to. Sitting in London's Corinthia Hotel, he's reflecting on a whirlwind couple of months in what's turning out to be a whirlwind career. It started with *Whiplash*, just his second film after 2009's little-seen *Guy And Madeline On A Park Bench*. A double-Sundance winner, this story of a jazz drummer and his volatile instructor at an elite music conservatory went on to win three Oscars from five nominations.

Fortunately, Chazelle wasn't stuck for what to do next. "I didn't have the problem that you sometimes have – when you have that Sundance success and you're not sure how to parlay it." He already had *La La Land* ready to go, written long before *Whiplash*. "For a long time, I'd wanted to do a musical in LA," he says. Working with his college roommate Justin Hurwitz, who wrote the music, he'd already hawked it around town with little success.

A pre-*Whiplash* Chazelle had no chance of launching such an ambitious project. But afterwards? This was his opportunity to make that film directors rarely get to make – his *Magnolia*, his *Pulp Fiction* – where you get to follow a success by throwing everything at the wall. This was going to be a musical with far-reaching ambitions: emotionally, structurally, cinematically. "It was hard to get it off the ground," he nods, "but once we did, we felt a responsibility to take it all the way."

Take that opening sequence. On a closed-off portion of the E-Z Pass ramp that leads to the 110 freeway, Chazelle had just two days to shoot it, with more than 100 dancers in the scene. While it's actually three shots cut together to look like one ("There's two hidden stitches there"), with real cars streaming by, Chazelle admits he was "pinching himself" at pulling off such an audacious scene. "I was a nervous wreck but also a kid in a candy shop while shooting it."

Briefly introducing us to Mia and Sebastian, it was a "coming together", says Chazelle, of all the film's major talents: production designer David Wasco, who arranged the colour-coordination of the cars; costumer Mary Zophres, whose outfits "would answer those car colours"; and cinematographer Linus Sandgren, "figuring out how to choreograph the camera" around the Mandy Moore-arranged dancers. All set to the first of the hugely joyous tunes by Hurwitz and New York-based songwriters Benj Pasek and Justin Paul.

It's moments like this that explain why Gosling believes Chazelle is "way braver" than he's ever been before. "It's like he was given the keys to the castle after *Whiplash*. He could do anything he wanted and he went, 'OK, I'm actually going to do that. I'm going to make this



Q&A

Double act

RYAN GOSLING AND EMMA STONE SING FOR THEIR SUPPER...



How would you describe your *La La Land* characters?

RYAN GOSLING: My character is a jazz pianist who is somewhere between a purist and a snob, who – if he was born 50 or 70 years earlier – might be considered in the ilk of his heroes. But now he's... background music at a bar; been around for a long time, trying to make it happen, having a hard time accepting that jazz is never going to be on the top of the charts again. He meets Mia and... look, I've just teed that up for you...

EMMA STONE: That was beautiful! A beautiful pass! Mia has lived in LA for six years, auditioning. She's at this cusp of figuring out whether she needs to pack it in and find a new dream or if she could continue doing this. When she meets Sebastian, she realises that she's closed herself off to the idea that she can create things that she wants to be a part of. She has this nostalgic idea of what it means to be an actor and what it means to do films.

Do you both relate to your characters and their dreams?

ES: I relate to what it feels like to really want something to work out and for it not to – auditioning, that feeling of rejection. My path was a little bit different. Coming to LA at 15 and doing my first movie just before I turned 18, you're maybe more wide-eyed and the whole world seemed open to possibility in a way that might be different than if I right now had been auditioning for six years and was about to turn 30 and figuring out what my life was going to be.

RG: Music has always been a part of my life. It's never been quite as high-brow as this. My uncle was an Elvis impersonator! I was in his act for a while. Then when he stopped doing that, my sister and I started singing at weddings. And after that, I tried to be a '90s hip-hop dancer! So I've been involved in music throughout my life, but never to this degree as this character, and never as dedicated or talented as he is. He's a great musician.

What does the film's title mean to you?

ES: I think like a magical head-in-the-clouds feeling comes to mind when I hear '*La La Land*'. Like a heightened alternate version of Los Angeles. There's the Los Angeles of dreams and hopes and then the underbelly of pain, despair and rejection!

RG: Then there's the whole musical element of '*La La*'. The nod to the musicality of the film – it's never really mentioned in the movie but I thought it was a really elegant title.

This is your third time together. Is there something that just clicks between you both?

RG: I think we just have a similar sense of humour, and sensibility. I think

we both feel lucky to be working actors, and we don't really take that for granted. It's exciting to get to work. You spend so much of your life trying to have choice and work with people you're inspired by. So when you're there… with Emma, I'm always reminded that this is fun and we're lucky to be doing this.
ES: I feel the same way.

What are your favourite films of each other's that you weren't in?
ES: Ooooh! *Half Nelson* and *Lars And The Real Girl*.
RG: *Magic In The Moonlight*. Obviously, I want to say *Birdman*, but I don't think you were in enough of that.

Emma, you're next playing Billie Jean King in *Battle Of The Sexes*. How was that?
ES: Such a cool experience. It's two storylines that move alongside each other, building up to the battle. The story was incredible and also, learning more about Billie Jean, I thought it would be a fascinating story to tell.
RG: Do you think you'll keep playing tennis?
ES: I want to. I just need a little break right now because it was so technical. Playing like her, it's different than playing tennis.

Meanwhile, Ryan, you're about to shoot *Blade Runner 2049*. Was that one that you simply couldn't say "no" to?
RG: Kind of! Like most people, I'm a fan of the original but as a fan, I was excited that there is a sequel and they were going to continue the story. I want to know what happens next! And to be asked to be a part of that, it's pretty exciting. And it's a tall order. But both Ridley and Harrison decided that they wanted to carry the story further, so I have to trust that they know what they're doing.

And you're getting to work with legendary cinematographer, Roger Deakins…
RG: To work with Deakins… if there's a Mount Rushmore of DoPs, he's in the middle! ***JM***

ALBERTO E. RODRIGUEZ / GETTY IMAGES



OLD HAND
Gosling practised for four hours a day to manage Chazelle's single-take shots of him playing.

original musical that no-one's trying to do.' It's so ambitious and he's so passionate about it… and that's what you want as an actor. You want to give yourself over to a director who is that prepared to risk everything."

The *Drive* star, 36, is sitting in a suite at the Beverly Hills' Four Seasons next to his co-star Stone, some months before the autumn festival season kicks off, doing some early press before heading to Hungary to make Denis Villeneuve's hugely anticipated *Blade Runner 2049*. Dressed in a denim jacket, black jeans and grey tee, Gosling is relaxed – except when he gets up to adjust the lighting – next to the effervescent Stone, today sporting a black skirt and a white blouse with lip-prints on it.

Their third time sharing billing, Gosling skips over their second outing – the dramatic-but-dull *Gangster Squad* – by admitting he wanted to return to the "lightness" of their first outing, *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, and "pick up where we left off". Fizzing together on-screen, away from it they're a neat double act – witness the moment *TF* asks where their characters meet. "They meet at a Trump rally! One's a protestor," deadpans Gosling. "That's exactly right!" chips in Stone. "The other one's a huge supporter."

Joking aside, the preparation for both was extensive. While the 28-year-old Stone had just been on Broadway performing in the musical *Cabaret* ("I was super-limbered up," she jokes), she still needed to learn to ballroom dance. Choreographer Mandy Moore brought in some of the pro-dancers from *Dancing With The Stars* – the US version of *Strictly Come Dancing*. "It was pretty incredible," says Stone, sipping on her Red Bull. "They're used to teaching people who don't really know what they're doing to dance quickly."

Gosling also had to practise piano for some remarkable performance sequences that had Stone gasping. "It's all in one take – it's crazy, it's crazy," she enthuses. While he'd played before ("kind of," he qualifies, "but certainly not jazz"), he spent months practising for four hours a day with a teacher. "And I still play those pieces – it's all I can play!" he laughs. "But it's a testament to the music, because I still like the music and I played it to a point where it should be making me insane!"

> 'I was super-limbered up!'
> Emma Stone



Compared to most movies, *La La Land* was "different", says Gosling. "As an actor, usually you can find a way to fake it, so it looks like you know how to do something," he says. "But in this, you have to do it because Damien wanted to shoot everything in long single takes. You couldn't cut to someone's hands playing the piano, and then cut out. You had to play that piece. Or we had to dance, and with one misstep, the whole thing is blown. The whole thing is riding on this one take."

The most challenging sequence in that capacity, volunteers Chazelle, was shooting the "sunset dance" between Mia and Sebastian – a six-minute unbroken take that comes when these two potential lovebirds are looking for Mia's car after meeting (again) at a party. Filmed in a park below Griffith Observatory, with LA a twinkling backdrop, Chazelle had just a half-hour window to shoot it during sundown. "My hands were a sweaty mess towards the end of every take," he laughs.



SINGING PRAISES
The pair impressed with their ability to humanise the technical set-pieces.

Music box

FIVE MUSICALS YOU NEED TO SEE BEFORE LA LA LAND...



SINGIN' IN THE RAIN
1952

Set as Hollywood is on the cusp of the talkies, Stanley Donen's heavenly 1952 masterpiece is a deft blend of romance, comedy and industry satire. Gene Kelly's titular song-and-dance is up there with the greatest musical numbers ever filmed.



THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG
1964

From its primary colours to its recitative style and Michel Legrand music, Jacques Demy's 1964 tale was a vivid – and distinctly European – shot in the arm for the musical. A young Catherine Deneuve, selling those umbrellas, is quite simply charming.



LOVE ME TONIGHT
1932

Lesser known, but Chazelle claims this as an inspiration for *La La Land*. It stars Maurice Chevalier as the Parisian tailor who poses as a nobleman and falls for Jeanette MacDonald's princess, while Rodgers and Hart provide the unforgettable songs.



ONE FROM THE HEART
1982

Francis Ford Coppola's 1982 'grand folly', this Las Vegas musical-romance starring Frederic Forrest and featuring an Oscar-nominated Tom Waits score was a flop on release. But beneath the lavish exteriors, this tale of a couple's affair was achingly personal.



TOP HAT
1935

The most successful film of their partnership, Fred and Ginger's enduring 1935 song-and-dance classic is another showbiz-set story. But it's the classy songs by Irving Berlin (including 'Top Hat, White Tie And Tails') and stunning tap routines that you'll remember. ***JM***

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GOING LA LA
(top) Emma Stone's Mia finds her man; (above) Chazelle on set; (below) out for a well-dressed stroll.

Following Chazelle's lead, Gosling and Stone looked for inspiration, turning to Hollywood icons Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, who made 10 movies together. "I didn't really know much about either of their work," admits Gosling. "I couldn't believe what a powerhouse Ginger Rogers was. It was so cool to discover her on this film and then also Fred Astaire. When you watch Fred's stuff, he's very antagonistic. He's breaking glasses on the bar or doing a tap-dancing step that sounds like machine-gun fire."

He and Stone also met with Gene Kelly's widow Patricia, who "gave us her blessing!" smiles Gosling. Stone's eyes light up at the memory. "She's like an archivist of all of his stuff… we had to put white gloves on!" Particularly impressive was the way Kelly leather-bound all his scripts. "We saw the one for *Singin' In The Rain*," recalls Gosling, "and in the point at the end of 'Singin' In The Rain', the number, you can see in pencil: 'Give the police officer the umbrella at the end.' It was so cool."

It may be nigh-on impossible to top Kelly's tip-tapping in the puddles, but *La La Land* has a go. Like the moment at which Mia and Sebastian, after watching *Rebel Without A Cause* together, wind up at the Griffith Observatory (a seamless cut from *Rebel*'s own famous scene set there). After they enter the planetarium, they float into the 'stars' for a "gravity-free dance". The very first idea Chazelle had for the movie, it's not a bad first date. "It's not too shabby," grins the writer/director.

Such moments meant Stone was left hugely impressed by Chazelle's daring. "Each shot seemed to make sense and be pre-planned in his mind," she says. If this sounds rigid, Chazelle's Oscar-winning *Whiplash* editor Tom Cross keeps the film ticking like a metronome. "You feel the rhythm of the movie," says Stone. "In *Whiplash*, you feel like you're moving along a drumbeat, and this is similar. Beyond just being a musical, the edit of the movie is so musical."

Chazelle is similarly complimentary about his stars – about more than the singing, the dancing and the ivory-tinkling. "The even bigger achievement of what they do in the movie is that they're able to humanise the whole thing. Even when there are these technically oriented set-pieces, you still feel the characters, you still feel the humanity, and that was the real challenge. That's where you really become thankful for having actors of that calibre."

With *La La Land* charming audiences wherever it plays, the next stop is awards season – with the film the current bookies' favourite to take Best Picture. "I'm definitely going to try and pace myself," laughs Chazelle, who bats away the idea that he'll need to be penning an acceptance speech or two. But what about Gosling and Stone – do they deserve to take home little gold statues as Best Actor and Best Actress? "I'm biased," he grins, "but of course!"



LA LA LAND OPENS ON 13 JANUARY.

FIGHTING SPIRIT



VINNY PAZIENZA'S RETURN TO THE RING AFTER BREAKING HIS NECK IS BOXING'S GREATEST COMEBACK. NOW THE SUBJECT OF **BLEED FOR THIS**, TOTAL FILM TRADES BLOWS WITH DIRECTOR BEN YOUNGER, AND STARS MILES TELLER AND AARON ECKHART...

WORDS JAMES MOTTRAM

In 1991, boxer Vinny Pazienza beat then-WBA junior middleweight champion Gilbert Dele after 12 punishing rounds. The underdog going in, the man nicknamed the 'Pazmanian Devil' left the ring as only the second boxer in history to win both lightweight and junior middleweight world championships in his career. Yet just weeks later came an almost fatal knockout blow: a serious car crash that broke his neck in two places, forcing him to relinquish his title. The doctors said he'd never walk again, let alone climb back in the ring to fight.

The remarkable ringside drama forms the core of Ben Younger's new movie *Bleed For This*, starring *Whiplash*'s Miles Teller as the heroic Vinny. "It's not a boxing movie," warns Younger, when *Total Film* meets him at London's Shoreditch House over coffee. "It's a comeback story."


RINGSIDE





ON THE ROPES (right) Teller's Paz in his ultra-confident prime and (above) being treated for a broken neck.

True enough. Going through gruelling rehab – defying both doctors' orders and the odds – this fighter's return to the ring 13 months after his accident has been dubbed the greatest comeback in boxing history.

To aid his recovery, Vinny – who later shortened his name legally to 'Vinny Paz' – spent three months wearing a Halo, a medieval-looking metal brace screwed into his skull in four places. Instead of recuperating in bed, he began working out in secret in his parents' downstairs basement. "He truly was risking paralysis," marvels Teller, perched on a Soho hotel couch in a leather jacket, jeans and boots a few weeks after *TF*'s encounter with Younger. "As the doctors say, any kind of slip up… you're going to be paralysed from the neck down."

His successful return to boxing – one that would see him reclaim his title – skirts that fine line between bravery and madness. "This is a story about a man making the impossible possible," remarks Aaron Eckhart, who plays Kevin Rooney, Vinny's boozy trainer who had previously tutored Mike Tyson. "It's a dream story." How many people would dare defy medical opinion in this way? "He knew it when he woke up in the hospital. This dude – listen, I know him. This dude, he's an anomaly."

GOING THE DISTANCE

No fan of boxing, Younger began the project as a writing assignment to "pay the bills". After making his directorial debut with the acclaimed broker-firm story *Boiler Room* in 2000, he followed it up with *Prime* five years later before seeing his career stall – a fact that helped him relate to Vinny's own story. "In some ways, I had stepped away. Obviously, I didn't break my neck, but when you don't make a movie for 11 years, you might as well have. It's hard to come back."

Deciding to direct, Younger set about casting his lead. Curiously, it wasn't Teller's turn as the jazz drummer in *Whiplash* that convinced him he was right for *Bleed For This*. "I like him in *Whiplash* a lot. But I think his performance in *The Spectacular Now* is a lot more varied, more dimensional." It's a curious leap, going from a high-school student with a drinking problem in James Ponsoldt's 2013 romantic-drama to a title-winning boxer – but one Teller was desperate to make.

"The movie for me is significant and monumental in so many different ways," he says. "I wanted to do a movie where I wasn't somebody's son and where I wasn't any kind of student. I wanted to take a movie that was more a masculine, challenging part." And he did exactly that, spending four hours a day learning to box with fight coordinator Darrell Foster, who previously trained Sugar Ray Leonard.

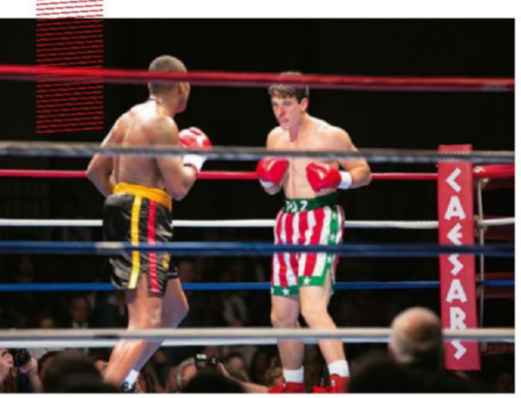
While Teller met with Vinny when he flew to Rhode Island to start shooting, he deliberately stayed clear during his prep. "Vinny's nearly 30 years older now… I didn't want to have him reflecting and telling me who he was." Still, the boxer endorsed Teller's casting. "He sent me a signed photo of himself saying, 'Miles, stuff a banana in your undies if you have to make it look bigger! Don't fuck up my reputation, kid. No joke – seriously! Vinny Paz.'"

Eckhart on the other hand was desperate for stories from the real-life boxer about his relationship with his trainer. "I wanted to hear from Vinny that he loved him, how much Kevin meant to him, how much he relied on him, what was the relationship like," he smiles. "Those dudes paaarrrtieeed! That's who they were. They went beyond that. The reason why that's important is that it shows what kind of mindset you have to have."

With Ciarán Hinds cast as Vinny's father Angelo and *Sons Of Anarchy*'s Katey Sagal as his mother Louise, it's perhaps Eckhart's appearance that's the most shocking. Described by his director as "super good-looking, super in-shape, vain even", a shaved-bald Eckhart is almost unrecognisable. "I showed the movie to [*Steven*] Soderbergh," reports Younger. "Didn't tell him who was in the film. Ten minutes… then he goes, 'Is that fucking Aaron Eckhart?' He's directed the man. That's when I was like [*dusts his hands off, job-done style*]."

Eckhart, pouring himself a cup of tea, cackles at the thought of fooling his old director on *Erin Brockovich*. "It makes me question that Steven doesn't even know who I am!" But he's swift to add that he wasn't "trying to stand out" to deliver an awards-baiting performance. "It's not the mission," he says. "I try to blend in, obviously. Kevin looks like that. Even with the way he sounds, which was very difficult… it was very scary for me." Younger was left impressed. "He's full in. Once he inhabited the character, that was it."

If this director had top-notch actors at his disposal, he didn't have the finances to match. "Pretty much every



'THIS IS A STORY ABOUT A MAN MAKING THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE'
AARON ECKHART



VINNY PAZ

TOTAL FILM MEETS THE REAL-LIFE BOXING INSPIRATION BEHIND BLEED FOR THIS...

How does it feel to see your life on screen?
Weird. Very weird. It's overwhelming. But I thought it would be a tremendous idea because I knew it would inspire so many people. In today's time, everybody needs some inspiration.

After your accident, what gave you the courage to fight again?
I was very lucky. I was very strong, determined. And when you put your mind to something, it's amazing what you can do. I wanted to stay strong and stay in shape to fight again – I didn't take no drugs or no medication. It was wild – a wild time in my life. I just knew what I wanted to do and I wasn't going to take 'no' for an answer.

What did you make of Miles Teller's performance?
Miles is great. He's a great guy but he's a great actor. He's a kid, he's not a fighter. But he played a great Vinny Paz. I don't think anybody else could've. He really did a tremendous job.

What do you think about other boxing movies?
Southpaw – I hated it! I hated *Southpaw* because they over-dramatised it. I hate it when they over-dramatise boxing movies. They made the kid like a moron – he was stupid. ***JM***



COMEBACK KING
Taking tips from trainer Kevin Rooney, played by a balding Aaron Eckhart.



boxing movie you can think of, just assume they had 10 times the budget," says Teller. "We did this movie in 25 days. Each boxing scene, each fight, we filmed in one day – which is unheard of." Teller was also facing real-life boxers – including Peter 'Kid Chocolate' Quillin, a former WBO middleweight who plays Roger Mayweather.

Inevitably, Teller took some blows to the face. "It's all good, man," he shrugs. "You have so much adrenaline when you're in a boxing ring and there's all these extras, and the people in the arena. We were filming in Providence where Vinny was from. All these people watched Vinny's fights, and Vinny's there and you got the camera going… you know that you're filming a boxing film and you got blood on your face, and you don't feel it until the next day."

With the second and third fights filmed on the last two days of the shoot, back-to-back, Younger was under immense pressure to deliver. He recalls speaking to David O. Russell, who made his own boxing picture, *The Fighter*. "I told him what the plan was. He said to me, 'You need to cut other scenes out of this movie. You cannot shoot a boxing scene in one day, it's physically impossible. Go cut some scenes and add some days to the schedule.' I said, 'I can't.'"

It didn't help that Edwin Rodriguez, the pro-boxer cast as Roberto Durán, turned up to set with a huge black eye. "Normally, you're *adding* make-up as the fight goes on," says Younger. "We were taking it off to show how fucked up he really looked." Then when it came to choreographing the fight, Rodriguez got the blocking wrong. "He fucking knocked out the boxing coordinator! The coordinator stood up and said, 'We're done, we can't do this. He's going to hurt Miles.'"

PULLING NO PUNCHES

Shot in December 2014, Younger somehow got *Bleed For This* in the can – only to see Hollywood suddenly awash with boxing movies, beginning with *Southpaw* and *Creed*. "I think my film is very different from *Creed*," says Younger. "*Creed* is by-the-numbers. It's a *Rocky* franchise movie. I don't have anyone on dirt bikes! This is a much more serious film." To come there's *The Bleeder* and Durán biopic *Hands Of Stone*. Of the latter, Younger snipes: "I've heard it's unwatchable."

For all the posturing, Younger has certainly carved out something different to his rivals: a movie where the triumph comes not from winning, but just from stepping back in the ring. "We just felt like we could make something special," adds Teller, rightly proud of his co-stars. But the big question remains: what does the real-life Vinny make of it all? "He loved it but he cried all through the movie," says Younger. "I can't imagine what it was like for him to watch."

BLEED FOR THIS OPENS ON 2 DECEMBER.


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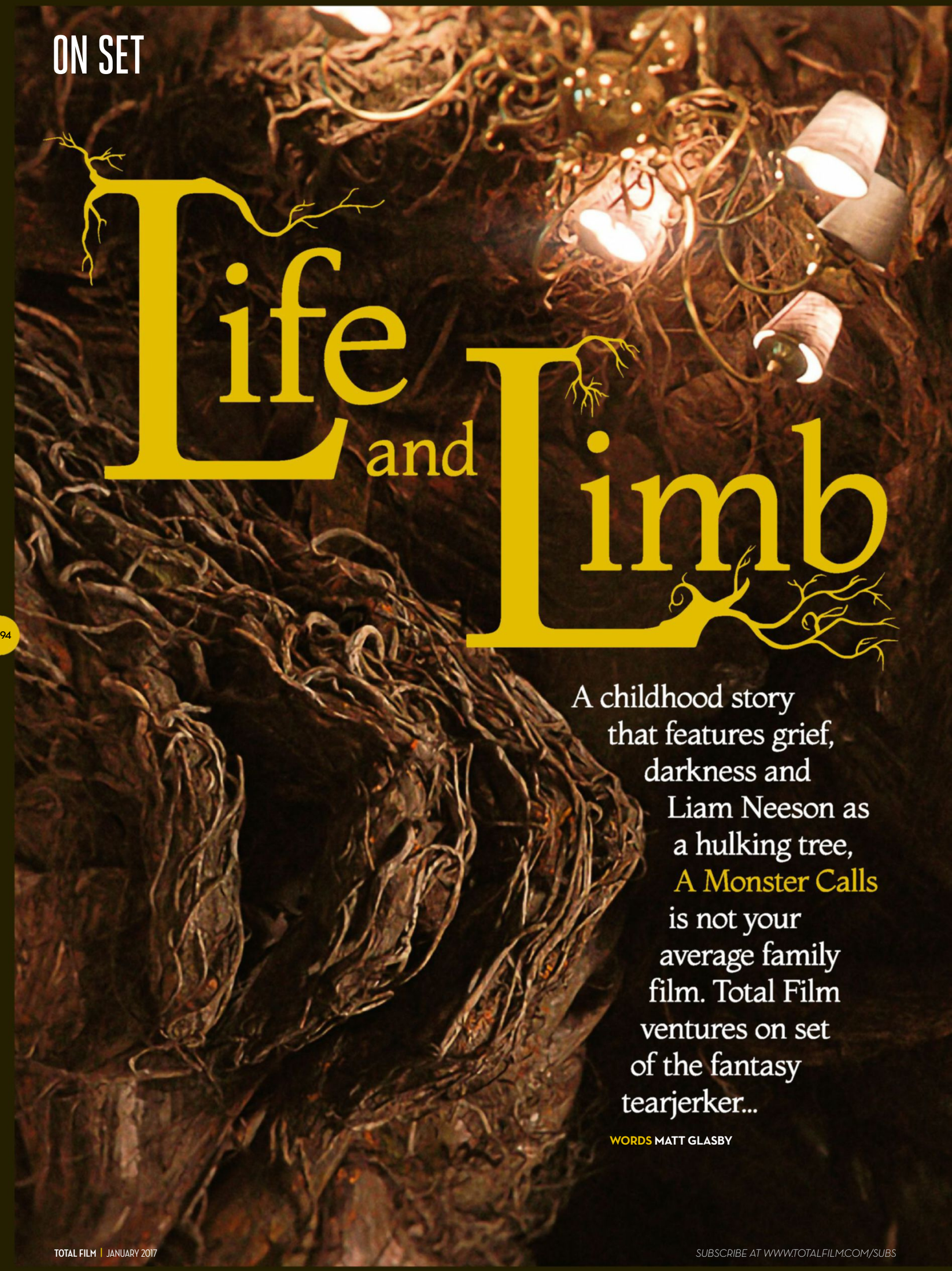
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Life and Limb

A childhood story that features grief, darkness and Liam Neeson as a hulking tree, A Monster Calls is not your average family film. Total Film ventures on set of the fantasy tearjerker...

WORDS MATT GLASBY

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A MONSTER CALLS





BOY WONDER (above) Young lead Lewis MacDougall impressed the star-studded cast.

It starts, as all things must, with an ending. In 2007, British children's author Siobhan Dowd died of breast cancer, leaving behind an outline for her next book, *A Monster Calls*. "She had characters, premise, a beginning but not time," wrote Patrick Ness in the introduction. But "stories don't end with writers". With permission from Dowd's estate, Ness finished the book for her in 2011, with award-winning results.

Heart-rendingly sad, and hauntingly illustrated by Jim McKay, it tells of Conor O'Malley, a schoolboy whose mother is dying of cancer, and who, every night at 12.07, is visited by a monster: the ancient yew tree from the churchyard behind his house, brought to roaring, rustling life. The Monster has three stories for Conor, to carry him through the darkness, stories that "chase and bite and hunt". One thing's for sure, awash with grief and gothic realism, *A Monster Calls* is a tale that sinks its teeth in.

Having proved himself a master of maternal anguish with *The Orphanage* (2007) and *The Impossible* (2012), Spanish director J.A. Bayona would seem the perfect choice to translate Ness' script to the screen. Working with him is super-producer (and "spare battery") Belén Atienza, who oversaw *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), *The Orphanage*… basically every decent Spanish-language fantasy of the past decade, and the award-winning team behind *The Impossible* (who call their boss "Bayona" or simply "Jota", pronounced "Hay-otter"). Even with material this tricksy – and when was the last time you saw a family film about cancer and talking trees? – you wouldn't bet against them. "It's not a comedy," confirms Bayona when we catch up with him on set in Terrassa, just outside Barcelona. Good job we cleared that up.

Wandering through the backlot, the spectre of mortality is everywhere. Today's scene, a recurring nightmare of Conor's, takes place on a huge, *Harry Potter*-ish graveyard based on the moody Manchester cemetery where the exteriors were shot. On real grass, brought over especially from Blighty, stand genuine-looking gravestones modelled on the originals, with the names and dates changed to protect the deceased. Despite the fact we're in Catalonia, it's *freezing*, the sunlight blocked out by the former TB hospital looming over us.

Kindly, someone from wardrobe fetches *TF* a massive red puffer jacket, so we can't really complain – especially as its previous owner was *Sigourney fricking Weaver*, who co-stars. On set, giant cranes hold up green screens hinting just how tall the Monster will be, massive wind machines howl, and 12-year-old Lewis MacDougall, who plays Conor, is strapped into stunt wires ready to shoot the next scene. Off to one side stands Bayona, a ball of fizzing Iberian energy, overseeing two units, six monitors and a crew of smoking Spaniards. "You don't make it easy for yourself do you?" *Total Film* offers. "No," he laughs. "Every time I shoot a film I regret that." And then the nightmare begins…

> 'MACDOUGALL IS SPECIAL. I WAS TOUCHED BY THE PURITY OF HIS PERFORMANCE' LIAM NEESON

The book is a classic. It's timeless, powerful and heart-breaking, but at the same time it's talking about things that are difficult to talk about in a way I haven't seen before," says Atienza between takes and telephone calls. "I was really moved. I mean, you read it in two hours; once you start with Conor you *cannot* leave that kid. And when you finish, it stays with you a long time…"



TAKING ROOT (above) Director J.A. Bayona on set with the giant Monster model.

With the weight of the film resting on Conor's shoulders, a particularly special young actor was required, and the watchful, wounded-looking MacDougall, who auditioned late in the process and had only recently made his screen debut in *Pan* (2015), fit the bill. "You should always shoot for the Moon," Ness tells us, from Los Angeles. "You might not hit the Moon but you might hit something interesting. I knew I was asking the world of a 12-year-old actor, but Lewis carried every single scene."

"I'd seen Bayona's work, and I was struck with the power and the beauty of the performances that he was able to elicit from those young actors," says Liam Neeson (who voices the Monster) when we catch up later, his voice like spilt single malt. "So I trusted that whoever he found would be something special and, indeed, Lewis is – he never, ever appeared to be acting, certainly with me. He was real, he was present, he was in the moment and was able to convey an extraordinary range of emotions. I was very touched by the purity of his performance."

With Felicity Jones as his mother, Weaver as his grandmother, Neeson as a father figure (albeit in tree form) and Toby Kebbell as his actual (but absent) dad, MacDougall was joining quite an acting dynasty. "Liam has the age and wisdom of the tree," says Bayona. "Then Felicity has the innocence of a mother. It's so unfair when you deal with the idea of dying young, I thought of Felicity, she's not only an extraordinary actress, she can also play a character that resembles a little girl. I like playing with parenthood in films, that moment





An author talks

Going from page to screen with **Patrick Ness**...

On adapting the book...

"Because of Siobhan and Jim's contributions, I'm the custodian of three people's work. And if the book works, I know *why* it works. So I wrote the script on spec, no studio attached, because I wanted to start the process saying, 'These are the things that *I* think are important.'"

On writing the script...

"On the first draft, I referred heavily to the novel. But the screenplay has to work on its own. What you lose in words you gain in imagery. The next passes were about setting the book aside and letting the screenplay survive on its own."

On meeting Bayona...

"I'm bad at first meetings – genuinely awful. So there was much awkwardness, but God bless him, he called almost immediately after, and said let's have a second meeting, just him and me, and we did."

On collaborating...

"He brought tons of ideas, and every one was *thoroughly* discussed. [*laughs*] I really believe my books must be strong enough to stand up to questioning – it only makes them stronger. But it was a really happy process, very collaborative."

On taking a chance...

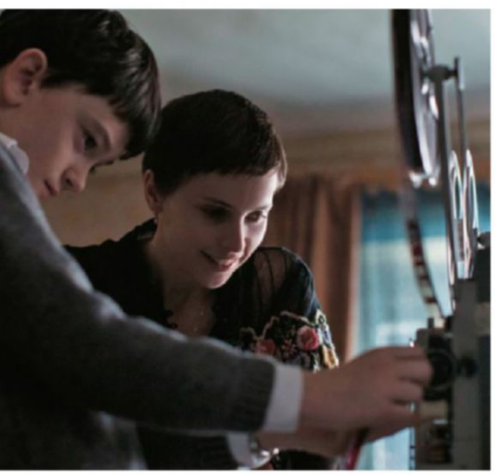
"Everything's a risk. If making movies is hard, making good movies is *much* harder, but I feel like I said my piece in the screenplay, I found a director who seems to understand and, off we go, let's see what happens." MG

when the kids behave like parents and the parents behave like kids…"

Part of Conor's journey is getting to grips with Weaver's dauntingly severe grandmother. But did the team share his fears? "Not really," says Atienza. "We were so excited: we're going to talk to Ripley! Our grandmother is so powerful we needed someone with a big personality, she's not like a sweet old lady. And, of course, Sigourney's a star so she's someone you cannot take your eyes away from. It's like when you see her on the screen the temperature changes."

It wasn't the only thing that changed – MacDougall is actually from Edinburgh, and Weaver's character speaks in a hard-won English accent. "Well, my mother is English and in the beginning I sounded like her," Weaver tells us, later, in a London hotel suite. "I worked with wonderful dialogue coaches to find the grandmother, because she couldn't sound like my mother, who went to RADA, I couldn't sound posh. But once you surrender to the accent and find it, it's actually a lovely thing, it's like putting on a lovely coat or something." On balance we decide not to mention the puffer jacket. When the conversation turns to the more naturally maternal figures she's played, she tells us that, "Carrie [*Henn, who played Newt in* Aliens] and I are still in touch. She always remembers my birthday, it's very sweet. She has her own children now, of course…"

With a story this moving – anyone who can get through the book without welling up is made of stone, never mind wood – the live-action scenes, shot in the muted grey-greens of earth and illness, guarantee tears before bedtime. But





TREE OF LIFE (above) The Monster, voiced by Liam Neeson, paying Conor a visit.

what of the tree, or the animated tales it spins? In a nice cinematic touch, added for the film, Conor is a keen artist (like Bayona was as a child, and his father too), so they seem to spill directly from his drawings as if he's willed them into being himself, a creator as much as a spectator.

A mixture of motion-capture CGI and a gigantic model, left in alarming chunks around the set, the Monster is a striking creation, an Iron Gi-Ent inked from nightmares. "Well, one of the things we've been struggling with is trying to make him look as real as possible," says Bayona. "In terms of the CGI, it should be photorealistic but with weight, like it's made of wood. I told the people from the VFX company that I wanted him to move realistically." At this, Atienza cuts in, "It's funny when you say that a tree has to move realistically!" Bayona continues: "It should be tough, clumsy, heavy, rigid – I don't want it to look like a CGI character. There's a moment in the film that references *King Kong* – [*pause*] the old one – and there's lots of shots we've done with a real hand, real foot, real face, and some of them are clumsy, the hand looks like a puppet and I love that. I love that because it has a soul that you lose in CGI. The VFX guys want perfection, but the soul is in the mistake, it's in the flaw."



For extra soul, Neeson did ten days of motion-capture work so the tree's movements would match his performance. "You're put into a body suit with all these little ping pong balls Velcro'ed into the joints, and surrounded by cameras – I had a camera mounted on my head – and you're 'on' all the time," he tells us. "You're connected to all these little computer nerds at the side of the stage, so when we shot a scene I was able to see approximately what this creature, this elemental force, might look like. As silly as I felt, certainly for the first day and a half, after that I kind of got into it. It was wonderful, it was just J.A. and myself and Lewis, and we worked very closely. We had a little mock-up of the boy's house and the back garden, so I was able to get a sense of how big the creature should be and adjust accordingly, to make sure when I was kneeling down or on my hunkers [*haunches*], my knee wasn't bursting into a house or something."

Back on the lot, in Conor's nightmare, we watch the Monster do *way* worse than that, thanks to the magic of SolidTrack, a camera system that allows the CG'ed creature to occupy the same space as MacDougall (on the monitors at least). A huge, building-

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A MONSTER CALLS









A FAMILY STORY (above) *Rogue One*'s Felicity Jones plays Conor's mum.

wrecking brute, it towers over the cemetery set as the earth shakes (thanks to the powerful hydraulics underneath), gravestones topple and deep fissures appear in the ground. Time and again, just as MacDougall's about to be swallowed by the ground, the wires save him from the abyss. It's an image that wouldn't be out of place in *The Impossible*, we tell Bayona, once "Cut!" has been called. So why does he keep returning to scenes of such wrenching child imperilment? "I'll give you the number of my psychotherapist," he jokes, "he'll make a better explanation."

But it's not a joke, not even close. In fact, the film looks death squarely in the face, which is pretty ballsy for an expensive SFX flick. "I think the best way to talk about big things is through fantasy," explains Atienza, "because big subjects are difficult to explain. Not difficult, impossible. These subjects, most of the time, they relate to mystery. You don't have answers for them so you need to tell tales to talk about them. And fantasy makes you think about these things, makes you feel them, even if it doesn't give you any answers, the trip is worth it."

Weaver finds the story similarly cathartic: "I feel like, for all of us with these problems of mortality and catastrophic illness, the Monster picked us up and put us on his shoulder."

"The Monster's there to imbue the kid with life lessons," says Neeson, "but certainly, when he first appears, he looks incredibly frightening and threatening, you know, as indeed all our innermost fears are, adults as well as kids. We have profound fears and they are ugly and terrifying until you start chipping away at them, when you realise they're legitimate fears, but the more you confront them, the more they will kind of sustain you through life's journey, and then eventually not become fears at all…"

"Bayona put it an interesting way," says Ness. "Reality doesn't have its own value, it merely is, so to find truth within it, we have to tell stories about it… that's how we make sense of a universe that seems chaotic and meaningless." None of which sounds very PG-friendly. "It's a children's film with the soul of an adult," explains Bayona. "But what I like about it is, it's what we do as filmmakers. We try and make people understand the world better through art. Which is what Conor understands at the end of the story: that art can heal…" In other words, stories don't end with directors any more than they end with writers.

A Monster Calls opens on 1 January.

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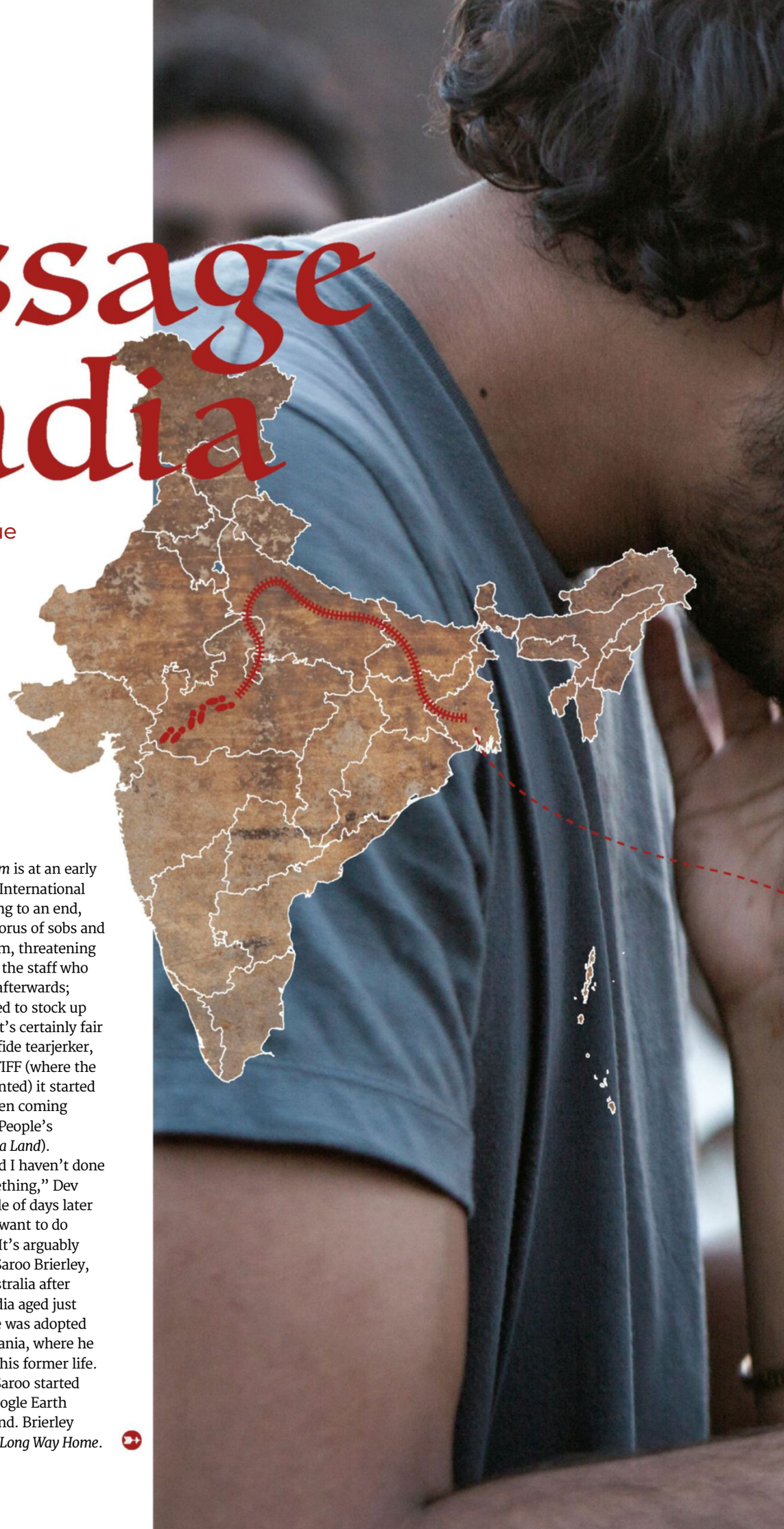
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A Passage to India



Retelling an astonishing true story, Lion charts Saroo Brierley's journey to find the family he was taken from in India using... Google Earth. Dev Patel and Nicole Kidman tell Total Film about the continent-crossing drama.

WORDS MATT MAYTUM

It's September 2016, and *Total Film* is at an early screening of *Lion* at the Toronto International Film Festival. The movie's coming to an end, and an almost overwhelming chorus of sobs and sniffles is rising in the auditorium, threatening to drown out the film itself. Pity the staff who have to come in and mop down the seats afterwards; cinemas showing the film are going to need to stock up on those 'Caution – slippery floor' signs. It's certainly fair to call this unbelievable true story a bona fide tearjerker, and after the first round of screenings at TIFF (where the reputations of awards favourites are cemented) it started to look like a sure fire Oscar contender, even coming runner-up in the festival's publicly voted People's Choice Awards (pipped by the mighty *La La Land*).

"I was crying [*when I read the script*], and I haven't done that before ever whilst I was reading something," Dev Patel tells *Total Film* when we meet a couple of days later at Toronto's Intercontinental Hotel. "You want to do justice to such a beautiful piece of work." It's arguably Patel's most mature role to date, playing Saroo Brierley, who was raised by adoptive parents in Australia after becoming separated from his family in India aged just five. After winding up in an orphanage, he was adopted by the Brierley family and moved to Tasmania, where he grew up barely retaining the memories of his former life. A couple of decades later while studying, Saroo started an extensive search using the fledgling Google Earth tool to search for the family he'd left behind. Brierley documented his experience in his book, *A Long Way Home*.

LION





It's a remarkable true story, with surface parallels to Patel's breakout hit, *Slumdog Millionaire*. Dressed in a light denim shirt and sporting wild, wavy hair and an unkempt beard, Patel has clearly come a long way since Danny Boyle's Oscar-winner played at the festival back in 2008. Back then he arrived wearing his school shoes and a borrowed suit. "It's really easy to compare it to *Slumdog* when you're dealing with a young boy in a situation of poverty in the beginning," says Patel, "but apart from that, thematically and tonally the films are completely different. *Slumdog* has a kind of frenetic energy about it, and a pacing, and this film is a sweeping story with these two pillars on each end, played by Priyanka [*Bose*] and Nicole [*Kidman*]: it's a mothers and son story."

Arriving "a little late to the party" in 2013, producer Emile Sherman (*The King's Speech*, *Shame*) met with the real Saroo to secure the rights, and Garth Davis (TV's *Top Of The Lake*) was appointed to make his directorial debut, having previously almost shot *Shantaram* in India with Johnny Depp, before that adaptation went to pieces. "I had my palm read when I was 19, travelling in Vietnam," smiles affable Aussie Davis. "She said, 'Ooh, there'll be a film in India.'" Those words turned out to be prophetic.

While there were logistical complications shooting a film that's split between India and Australia, *Lion* had a major benefit compared to a lot of true-lifers: many of the main players were easily accessible to the cast and crew, not least Saroo himself. "It was almost immediately I started working with the real people," explains Davis. "That's where I started from. Then when Luke [*Davies, screenwriter*] came on board, he did the same thing. I just needed to retrace all the steps of the story and try to meet anyone that was alive or part of the story." Davies himself recalls meeting Saroo's birth mother, Kamla. "That was an interesting experience because she was amazingly generous," he reflects. "But I also just made her weep for two hours. It was really moving. It was a complex couple of hours."

The actors were also able to gain insights from their real-life counterparts. "I got to know Sue," Nicole Kidman tells *TF* of the adoptive mother she portrays. Kidman is almost unrecognisable in the film under a short red perm, but today she looks every inch the movie star in a pale blue dress and jacket, the golden buttons matching her long, straight hair. "I got to know her pretty well," she continues. "She shared so much of her life. She's very open, but protective too. She kept saying, 'I want you to play me.'" Kidman modestly suggests the reason she wanted her in the role was for their matching porcelain skin, though Davis sees it differently. "I think she saw a lot of similarities," he asserts. "Adopting children [*two of Kidman's four children are adopted*], and just her strength and her resilience, in the face of Hollywood, and lots of criticism and reviews. You face a lot as an actor. So I think Sue looked up to Nicole and really admired her."

Patel, though, doesn't see many similarities between himself and Saroo. "He's a lot cooler than me," laughs Patel. "He's beautifully smart and opportunistic. The fact that such a young child could survive such an ordeal… I remember being separated from my mother at a supermarket in London. I was looking at toys. She was there one second. I turned away, and she was gone. It was five minutes. It felt like five hours. I was panicking. This is me in London, at home. Until that voice came on – 'Dev Patel, come to checkout number five' – I was crying. You just imagine what this young boy went through and how long he was alone for. It's a real tale of survival…"

MAPPED OUT
Dev Patel as the adult Saroo, tracking down his birth family online.



In its big-screen retelling, Saroo's story is given a surprisingly conventional structure: *Lion* isn't framed with flashbacks, but simply starts with young Saroo (played by Sunny Pawar) in India, and follows his ordeal as he gets separated from his older brother after a day spent begging at a train station; an innocent mistake saw five-year-old Saroo inadvertently shipped 70km across the country, where he was taken in by a centre for abandoned children, before relocating to Australia with the Brierleys. Patel picks up the role of Saroo in the second half of the film, when his girlfriend Lucy (Rooney Mara) encourages him to investigate his past via the painstaking method of Google Earth searches. Screenwriter Davies took an unlikely



inspiration for the structure. "My model for the first part of the film was *WALL·E*," he explains. "The first 45 minutes are just someone in an extremely alien, difficult environment, bereft of contact and full of peril."

That in itself presented Davis with the biggest challenge of the film. "It was a completely terrifying, sobering reality that the first half of the movie had to be held by a five-year-old child. So I felt very awake." Pawar was found after an extensive search, which began early on in order to allow time for the rigmarole of arranging visas. Working with casting agents in India, the production team saw more than 2,000 boys in their search, and Pawar turned out to be quite the find. Though naturally the pair don't share any scenes together, Patel spent a fair bit of time with Pawar. "I went to set a lot, and was just observing and getting in the way," jokes Patel. "It was like, 'Dev, move out of the way. The real actors are there.'" Self-deprecation aside, it was key for the film that Patel and Pawar bonded, which they did through various exercises under the instruction of Davis. "It was important for all of us to make sure the energy was the same, that there was a through line," admits Patel.

No bonding exercises were required for Kidman and David Wenham (*The Lord Of The Rings*' Faramir), who plays Saroo's adoptive father John Brierley. "There's a connection," grins fellow Aussie Wenham. "There's a history between the two of us."

"We go way back," cuts in Kidman. "A long, *long* time." The pair attended the same drama school as teens.

> 'Saroo's beautifully smart. He's a lot cooler than me.'
> **DEV PATEL**

"I remember Nicole doing *Bush Christmas*, *BMX Bandits*, all those things," continues Wenham.

"I remember seeing David in *Equus*," retorts Kidman.

"Oh, here we go…"

"He was amazing, and, as you'd imagine, nude."

"So, yeah, there is a connection…" blushes Wenham.

Beyond giving cause for the cast to poke good-natured fun at their back catalogue, *Lion* will leave audiences with plenty to chew on, given its relatable themes. First and foremost, there's the light it sheds on the topic of adoption. "My guess is it's going to bring about a really interesting dialogue, and bring this issue to the surface," considers Davis. And of course there's the universal fascination with Google's world-mapping tech. "Hasn't everyone used Google Earth?" asks Kidman. "I have. I've looked in the swimming pool in my backyard and gone, 'That's my house!' Then I've [*zoomed*] in, going, 'How much can you see?'" she laughs. And, of course, there's also the communal experience of having a good cry in the cinema. Kidman took her sister to see the film. "She leaned in about 10 minutes into the film already crying and went, 'Is this going to keep on like this?' She actually said, 'There's some movies that you just go and watch, and then there's films that transform you. This is transformative.' I thought that was a beautiful explanation of the experience of seeing it."

FAR FROM HOME (above) Kidman plays Saroo's adoptive mother and (below) director Gareth Davies with Patel.

LION OPENS ON 20 JANUARY.



WORDS MATT MAYTUM PORTRAITS JENNIFER ROBERTS

> CHOOSING ROLES IS THE EASY PART. IT'S NOT HARD TO KNOW WHAT YOU LOVE. IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO FOLLOW YOUR HEART

MICHELLE WILLIAMS

One of the most poignant performers of her generation, Michelle Williams has brought grit and gravity to a variety of heartbreaking roles. She returns in awards favourite Manchester By The Sea, a potent reminder of just how good she really is. Total Film meets the softly spoken powerhouse.

JENNIFER ROBERTS/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

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To be totally candid, I haven't seen the movie yet," Michelle Williams tells *Total Film* the first time we meet to discuss *Manchester By The Sea*. We're at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2016, where the film has played to another round of critical adulation, with three-time Oscar nominee Williams' supporting performance highlighted for significant praise. The film sees her play Randi, the ex-wife of grief-stricken janitor Lee (Casey Affleck), who finds himself back in his home town of the title to care for his nephew following his brother's death.

It's a raw, authentic meditation on grief, and not one Williams relishes watching back. "I'll enjoy watching Casey, and what Kenny [*Lonergan, writer/director*] was doing with his camera," she says, in a breathy whisper. "But to me, the outcome isn't the thing. I'd be perfectly happy to go from experience to experience and never have them out there. I'm just here for the learning, and watching myself has never been the best way for me to learn. That's just the way for me to beat up on myself."

Williams has something of an ethereal quality, and it's not just because of her platinum crop and pixie-perfect features; she speaks in hushed, measured tones with a wisdom far beyond her 36 years. When we catch up on the next leg of *Manchester*'s tour – at the London Film Festival in October – she's more lively, greeting *TF* by checking, "Would you vote for Trump?" Answering "Hell no!" allows us into the suite at the Corinthia Hotel to continue the interview ("I still haven't seen it," she admits). Pouring *TF* a glass of water, she seems upbeat, but has a tendency to withdraw into her thoughts, and trail off midway through an answer.

Perhaps it's because her roles have tended to focus on heavy subject matter. Having acted since the age of 12, Williams amicably emancipated herself from her parents as a teenager to pursue her career. Her breakout was as the ultimately tragic Jen in *Dawson's Creek*, a teen drama more mournful than most. A steady stream of predominantly indie films followed, until 2005's *Brokeback Mountain* brought her mainstream attention with award nominations across the board (including Oscar, Bafta and Golden Globe nods).

Ang Lee's celebrated drama will always be a bittersweet point on Williams' CV, as it's where she met the late Heath Ledger, father to her daughter, Matilda Rose. Having dealt with a very public tragedy, it's perhaps unsurprising she doesn't seem to want to dwell on some of *Manchester*'s key themes. Post-*Brokeback*, her work has been defined by quietly affecting, frequently fierce performances in auteur-driven dramas (*Synecdoche, New York*, *Blue Valentine*, *Shutter Island*, *Take This Waltz*, and three films with key collaborator Kelly Reichardt), plus a couple of bolder, more playful turns in the likes of *Oz The Great And Powerful* and *My Week With Marilyn* (though her Monroe was still shaded with melancholy). That streak is set to continue in a recently announced Janis Joplin biopic, but next up, *Manchester By The Sea* finds her deservingly back in line for the highest acting accolades…



HOME TRUTHS
Williams as Casey Affleck's ex-wife in *Manchester By The Sea*.

Was Randi in *Manchester By The Sea* an emotionally draining role?
Yes and no. The movie was shot in Boston, and I was in New York, and that's only like a four-hour train ride away. And I was only ever gone for maybe two or three days at a time. So whatever happened, it was really contained, and it was outside of my normal life experience. So it was much easier to manage. And I would only have to sustain something for a few days at a time – which is different than making a movie where you're in every single day, and you have this kind of monkey on your back.

How was it concentrating all the required emotions in just a few scenes?
Just because it's a small part doesn't mean she's a fraction of a person, so you only have so much time to relay the information. That's a certain kind of difficulty, but one sort of advantage I found was that I had so much time to prepare. I would go up on these day trips to Boston and just stay in the area and listen to the women, talk to women on the streets, invite myself over to people's homes, stop women, take pictures of women, and read and think and research, and just kind of capture the feeling of the place and of the people. So I had a lot of time to work on it, but only about four scenes or something that I had to work on. I was really allowed to have a hyper-focus.

***Manchester* is a film that's likely to be in the awards conversation. Do awards and nominations mean a lot for you?**
The thing is – I said it to Casey [*Affleck*] the other day – it really shows it's just as hard to make a bad film as it is a good film. You work just as hard. You care just as much. You suspend your life and give everything that you have to this endeavour. And then it turns out badly. It's not for a lack of trying. So when a movie that you're in succeeds, it's wonderful. But it doesn't make the experience more valuable than the others. I've been doing this since I was



12. It was a real rough ride for about 10 years. If I were to attach at any point to failure, I would have given up. And if I were to attach at any point to success? God knows what would have happened to me.

You've collaborated with Kelly Reichardt several times. Do you have a lot in common with each other?
To say that I have something in common with Kelly Reichardt would really be giving me too much credit. Filmmaking is a director's medium. It truly is, and I think of myself as a worker in her factory. I think of myself as like: I have a little job in a little room, and I build my little cog, but I do it to her specifications, and I do it under her direction. It's the honour of my lifetime, truly – maybe more than anything else. To have collaborated with her three times is the greatest success that I could imagine.

How has your relationship with her developed across those three films?
We don't need a lot of politeness in our communication. We can cut to the chase. We're not gentle. We don't have to be tender with each other. We're tender with each other as friends – very tender and very concerned with how each other are doing. But when it comes to our working relationship, we're not necessarily gentle.

Has any director besides Kelly made a particular impact on you?
They all have. Each one is as important as the others. Even the bad ones. Because, oh man, what do you learn more from than your mistakes? What do you learn more from than when you don't trust your instincts and decide to side-step your intuition and wind up in a pile of quicksand? It'll take you a long time to make that same mistake, because that experience is just so unpleasant. I find that they really all have equal value to me. The ones that have been more successful – it doesn't necessarily mean they're more… I mean, I'm happier when people like them, but it doesn't mean that I learned more from them or that I tried more in them. They just had the right combination of things. But the bad movies, they align me just as much as the good ones.

> **FILMMAKING IS A DIRECTOR'S MEDIUM… I BUILD MY LITTLE COG**

You said you take on roles "for the learning" – what do you mean by that?
I'm here to get better, to try things I haven't tried before and to just take what I learn from one experience. It's often hard to learn something. It's hard to learn a process and then produce all at once. And sometimes the learning comes out in the next thing you do. I'd done a play – *Cabaret* – before this for a year. It was very difficult. But what I learned there came out in this movie, and that feeling was very exciting – "OK, I can push my own limits, and then feel the growth the next time round." And that makes me think, "Well, maybe I can do this for a long time, because I won't be stuck with this perspective and this body and these ideas." If I challenge myself, then I'll grow, and then more work will be available to me. I'm just trying to learn.

How do you choose your roles?
Choosing is the easy part. It really is! First of all, there's only a certain amount of things that come to you. It's not like I'm looking at a feast of delicious options and trying to decide if I'd rather have truffles or foie gras. It's barren. So when this

comes along, it's like, "Ugh, thank God. I've been so hungry. This is exactly what I want." So that's the easy part. And making the thing, that's when it gets difficult. But it's not hard to know what you love. It's not that hard to follow your heart.

Do you remember the moment you realised you wanted to act?
As a kid. I remember going to see a play in a little warehouse, a rundown warehouse, and the ceiling was leaking. It was a kids' play, but I remember hanging on to the sides of my chair like it was going to take off. Or like I was going to take off. I wanted to jump up onto the stage with them. I remember that moment.

What made you want that?
When I went to go see this play, you had to walk by the backstage. You walked by people getting dressed and sorting out their props. I really was drawn to the kind of community it offered – both the backstage and onstage aspect. And that has become really the way to this day that I like to work. I like to work with people… I like to feel like a family; the closer, the better. Which is why independent cinema is the place that I feel most at home.

There's a lot of talk about pay inequality in Hollywood. Is that the same in independent film?
I don't even know if anybody even gets anything in independent. There's nothing to go around in any direction. I actually think that in independent film, because there's little to begin with, I don't think anybody's actually getting any more than anyone else. I hadn't really thought about it before, but I think that's true. When you make movies on this scale, the chance of anyone seeing it is so slim, that they're made with these micro budgets. So nobody – not Casey, not myself – showed up because we were going to get something out of it other than the experience.

You mentioned the sheer amount of research that you did for *Manchester*. Do you approach all roles in that same way?
I do. I'm a dork.

Does the research take different forms for every role?
I suppose they're different, based on what they are. For *Cabaret*, I went to Berlin and to the Adlon [*hotel*] she talks about. I went to the bars and the dancehalls; I visited places that had been cabarets; I went on a tour; I went to [*author of* Goodbye To Berlin *Christopher*] Isherwood's apartment. I like to spend as much time as possible in the environment and the person, so that when I get to set, I don't feel like a big fat liar. That's my goal. I want to believe myself.

You've acted from such a young age, so when did this research start becoming such an important part of the process?
It's been something I've liked to do for a long time. When I did *Brokeback Mountain*, the dialect coach and I went to Wyoming, and we sort of toured around for a week. We'd sit in bars and listen to people. I'm just trying to pick up little clues, little details, little anythings. It's not necessary, and sometimes I don't do it as thoroughly. It just makes me feel like I'm not a phoney. I don't think it's about lying. I think it's about believing what you're doing, to the point you think you're telling the truth.

As a teenager you emancipated yourself from your parents so you could pursue your career. Were you always driven?
I've always been incredibly independent and stubborn and wilful. But it wasn't so much about being driven from a career standpoint. I really just didn't want to go to high school anymore. I wanted to get out. I wasn't happy. And I wanted to be by myself, and I wanted to be on my own, and this seemed like the way to do it. It wasn't so much that I had a burning ambition, like some sort of clear trajectory. I just didn't want to be in high school. [*laughs*] Like most kids feel! But I had this weird escape hatch. I wouldn't advise it though for other people. I feel like it should come with a little warning attached to it, which is: "Don't try this at home." I just feel so lucky.

> **I LIKE WORK TO FEEL LIKE A FAMILY. THE CLOSER, THE BETTER**

What do you think you got out of the experience of *Dawson's Creek*, beyond the exposure it got you?
I met my best friend [*Busy Phillips*] on that show. She was so cool and so tough then. She's still cool and tough, but oh my God, I looked up to her so much. And I had to grow up. It was in North Carolina, and that was a nice place to be young. It was sleepy and safe – before social media. We weren't always perfectly behaved, but we got away with it because there were some caring adults that looked out for us, and nobody was, you know, tweeting about what we



FIVE STAR TURNS

DAWSON'S CREEK 1998-2003
Williams thanks her six seasons as troubled Jen Lindley for letting her "get comfortable with the camera". Her character's death remains one of TV's teariest moments.

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN 2005
Williams landed her first Oscar nod for playing Heath Ledger's betrayed wife Alma in Ang Lee's gay western. "As soon as she walked in, I knew it was her," Lee recalls.

WENDY AND LUCY 2008
Williams began a fruitful relationship with director Kelly Reichardt (see also *Meek's Cutoff* and *Certain Women*) with this poignant portrait of a homeless woman.

BLUE VALENTINE 2010
She showed a talent for tap in this wrenching study of a relationship's upbeat origins and its acrimonious dissolution. "It just knocked me down," she says of Derek Cianfrance's drama.

MY WEEK WITH MARILYN 2011
Playing an icon is no mean feat, but Williams brought both star power and a touching vulnerability to Simon Curtis' nostalgic recreation of *The Prince And The Showgirl*'s difficult production. ***NS***



ALLSTAR

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did or where we went. That was a good place to make mistakes and bounce off the walls, but land safely.

How do you look back on your character Jen? She was seen as the wild one at the time, but looking back, she was the coolest and most open-minded.
Nobody liked poor Jen. It really hurt my feelings so badly. There were all these websites like "I Hate Jen" and "Jen Is Stupid And Whorish". It's like, she's just a messed-up teenage girl! So I'm glad that with a little hindsight, she comes through. It was a very strange thing to play somebody when you're a teenager and your identity is forming and their identity is one that people aren't responding favourably to. It's pretty cruel on your self-esteem. [*laughs*]

You've very much avoided fluffy romcom material. Is that intentional?
I don't know. I'm interested in human sexuality, but I'm not really interested in sexiness. I somehow find those things to be disconnected from real human sexuality and veer into the territory of sellable sex or attractiveness. It just doesn't feel good to me.

On the subject of realistic relationships, *Blue Valentine* is a modern classic. Was that a heavy-going experience?
Yeah, that was rough. The thing about it also, it was a very particular time of my life when I was not… I was pretty remote to myself. I was really quiet. So it was just heavy all around.

Did that role stay with you?
They all do, in their ways. They all really do. but I can remember Ryan [*Gosling*], a year after seeing each other, saying something like, "Wow! Who's this Michelle that talks? This is different." Because sometimes they really sink you into a place.

In terms of disappearing into characters, was Marilyn Monroe your most physical role, in that sense?
Definitely. I've never undergone such a physical transformation before. We're so different in the way we carry ourselves, our voices, our gestures, everything. I really had to become someone else, right down to my fingertips and my teeth.

What did you take away from that role?
I really loved that holistic approach. I really felt like that was one of the first times I didn't feel particularly disembodied. That really got me curious. I think it's the

MICHELLE WILLIAMS IN NUMBERS

$1.2bn
Michelle Williams' total box-office gross to date.

128
Episodes of *Dawson's Creek* that Williams appeared in.

9
Years older than Janis Joplin, who died aged 27. Williams is set to play her in a biopic.

41
Acting nominations received for her role as Marilyn Monroe in *My Week With Marilyn*.

8
Years between reading the script for *Blue Valentine* and beginning filming.



reason I've wound up doing a lot of theatre in the last few years, because it's just opened me up to a more whole-body expression, and that really lends itself to theatre because, you know, the stage is big, and it also contains negative space. I just started thinking: what would it be like to let myself get bigger instead of smaller? So I think *Marilyn* set me off on the last three or four years of my life.

Are you someone who stays in character, or can you shake it off?
I really love to drive to and from work. I *love* it. Those little portals. So yeah, I can get out whatever I need to get out on the way home, and hopefully arrive as myself.

Like *Manchester By The Sea*, *Shutter Island* cast you as a supporting character that has a huge impact. Was that a completely different experience?
Yeah, it really was. The people in that were so different. The very specific time in my life was so different. When I made *Manchester*, I was just coming off of doing *Cabaret* for a year, so I felt like I was thoroughly worked out. It's such a funny thing; when you make a movie, you don't actually spend a lot of time acting. But when you do a play, you spend a tremendous amount of your time acting – because that's an almost-three-hour show, and I did it eight times a week. You're much more practised.

***Brokeback Mountain* was, at the time, your most celebrated role. Did it feel like there was a shift for you after that?**
Definitely, which I really didn't know how to handle. I was used to sort of… [*pause*] Yeah, I just didn't know how to handle it. I was really disoriented, actually.

In terms of the number of scripts that were coming in?
Yeah, or people even caring. I was so used to just kind of… I don't know, like, shuffling along and eking out little things, and not really having any consequence on the world, you know, personally or professionally. And then all of a sudden, people were watching – and I found it really… [*trails off*]

Was the awards circuit overwhelming?
It really is. It's pretty out-of-body. I was really young, too. It was also a very special time of my life, but it was more attention than maybe is good for people to have.

How did a huge VFX blockbuster like *Oz The Great And Powerful* compare to the smaller indie films you've done?

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I mean, that was so big because… it was such a fun set to be on. Sam Raimi is a scholar and a gentleman and a father and an improv comedian. Everything on one of his sets is a pure joy. I was really happy to make something that was expressly for kids and for families, because I wind up seeing a lot of those movies. [*laughs*]

Was the acting side of it different when you're on that scale of set?
Yeah. I'd never done a scene with a tennis ball before. It was totally my first time.

Are there any films of yours you wish had either been more widely seen or better received?
I wish people were throwing money at Kelly Reichardt to make her movies. They'd become international sensations and she'd be in a really comfortable, lucrative, high-powered position.

What can you say about your upcoming role in P.T. Barnum biopic *The Greatest Showman On Earth* with Hugh Jackman?
When I did *Cabaret*, I was so happy singing and dancing that I just knew I wanted more of it in my life, and when this came on, I thought, "Aha! Here it is!" It films in Brooklyn. I get to stay at home. It's 10 minutes from our apartment. It's a dream job. I pinch myself every day. I cannot believe it. I go to work with Hugh Jackman. Somebody's teaching me how to sing and dance. And I'm home in 10 minutes. This is a dream. We're just rehearsing right now, but the music is gorgeous, and the dance teachers are so good. I'm having a lot of fun. It's taking some of [*the stuff I learned on* Cabaret] and then expanding the dances way beyond my current capabilities.

And you're working with *I'm Not There.* director Todd Haynes again…
That's from the book *Wonderstruck*. It's a book for older kids, and I really love making things that kids can see.


Williams earning her third Oscar nom in *My Week With Marilyn*.

Is your daughter interested in seeing what it is you do?
Definitely.

> **I KNEW I WANTED MORE SINGING AND DANCING IN MY LIFE**

How would you feel if she was keen to act?
I'd advise against skipping school, but whatever brings out Matilda is what I'm here to support. So whatever she wants is fine by me.

What drives you as an actress?
A certain part of it is just momentum. It's a thing that I've been doing for a long time, so it would be abrupt and shocking to end it or to try and do something else. I've been doing plays recently, and I guess that's an attempt to branch out a little bit in my own way. But the thing that drives me is probably the feeling that… like, I could have done that better.

Is that a positive or negative feeling?
I think it's positive. [*pause*] I think it's a really positive thing. I always see room for improvement, so that makes me want to try it again.

It's hard to believe there's much room for improvement…
There's a *lot* of room for improvement. Believe me. Be-*lieve* me. Every day. You just feel like you're just always like, "Ugh, I'm so limited, because I'm myself. If only I was somebody else, and I could have their ability or have their perspective." It's hard to be inside of your own ability all the time. It just feels like confinement.

MANCHESTER BY THE SEA OPENS ON 13 JANUARY.

MICHELLE WILLIAMS FAN CLUB

"I've never seen someone with the dedication and really, really specific work on all fronts… It was a real treat to get to witness that."
Eddie Redmayne

"Michelle is one of the strongest people I have ever met. She has such an inner strength."
Derek Cianfrance

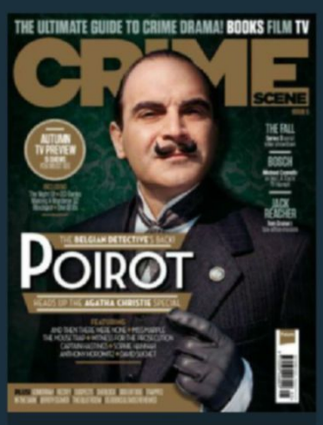
"She's very pleasurable to work with and to watch in editing, and to see over the years how she just gets better."
Kelly Reichardt

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FILM DISC OF THE MONTH

NO MEAN FEAT

WHY THE BFG STANDS TALL AMONG SPIELBERG'S FILMS

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE	★★★	P119
CHEVALIER	★★★★	P119
DARK WATER	★★★★	P121
DAY FOR NIGHT	★★★★★	P121
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52 PICK-UP	★★★	P121
GHOSTSBUSTERS	★★★★	P118
HOLIDAYS	★★★	P119
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FILM DISC OF THE MONTH

tall order

SPIELBERG REACHES OUT TO THE LOST WORLD OF CHILDHOOD...

THE BFG *PG*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT 21 NOVEMBER DVD, BD, 3D BD, VOD **EXTRAS** Featurettes



SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED...

THE IRON GIANT *1999*
Brad Bird's classic is a tender, towering delight.

BING *2014-5*
Mark Rylance nurtures an accident-prone bunny in CBeebies' award-winner.

WHEN MARNIE WAS THERE *2016*
Ghibli's delicately threaded beauty explores magic and mortality.

Does Steven Spielberg's return to family film prove he can't speak the language of his audience's inner child anymore? The disappointing box-office returns might suggest as much, but the rich, warm film itself is only a let-down if you wanted an up-scaled *E.T.* and no more. Less a failed stab at recapturing old magic than a sweet, sad fable dispatched from old age to the alien country of youth, *The BFG* speaks a children's movie language we may not always recognise: but "swiggle" your ears closer and its whisperings can still move and amaze.

Granted, you can see why viewers may have been flummoxed when they didn't get *E.T.* reheated. Spielberg's first Roald Dahl adaptation reunites him with *E.T.* writer Melissa Mathison (and, of course, *E.T.* composer John Williams). And it focuses on a wrinkly old-timer who befriends a grieving child at a tender age: in this case Sophie (Ruby Barnhill), an orphan growing up in the *E.T.*-ish era of "Ronnie and Nancy" namechecks.

Other echoes of prime Spielberg linger. Proving he can still splice fear and wonder, the scenes of Sophie gazing up at a shadowy figure as she's plucked from her orphanage recall young Barry in *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind* and the view from the Jeep window in *Jurassic Park*.

NEW TRICKS

Yet as the BFG (Mark Rylance) bounds off-map and into Giant Country, Spielberg steers into freshly, quietly contemplative terrain. Holding the pace steady, he and Mathison give Sophie and the BFG time to become acquainted, aware that the "titchy little snapperwhipper" and the "old sage and onions" come from alien worlds. Spielberg has often explored communication across a divide – *Close Encounters*' music, *E.T.*'s halting grammar – yet the BFG's "twitch-tickling" language issues offer a particularly, playfully resonant twist on the theme.

The use of CGI likewise reflects a fresh vitality in Spielberg. The giant's

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No really, he *is* behind you...





TOP
Sophie's not sure the hand's a good idea. She's seen how *King Kong* ends...

MIDDLE
A mo-capped Mark Rylance is superb as the titular giant.

home clutter seems tactile and lived-in, a detailed backdrop that is never allowed to distract from the story of a growing friendship. When Sophie joins the BFG on a dream-catching trip, the *Close Encounters*-ish flurries of light and magic never override her joy in discovery.

Pinpoint casting makes doubly sure of it. Rylance deserves every superlative: resisting the urge to act up to the temptations of mo-cap fantasy, he brings the BFG down to intimate size with his slow speech patterns, musical cadences and sweet-toned eyes. Barnhill does herself proud in exalted company, aided by a script that doesn't saddle her with the weaponised quipping of a zillion tween-pics.

In this context, *The BFG*'s nastier giants lumber in like renegades from a Peter Jackson Tolkien film, as if to hint at a kind of movie that Spielberg did not want to make. He has fun with them, but their "horrigust" appetites aren't over-fed.

MORTAL DANGER

Deeper shadows loom from Spielberg's own films. Adding to Dahl's narrative, Mathison gives the BFG the memory of a boy he lost – a boy with a red coat. While it might be ill-judged to say the BFG is an out-sized Oskar Schindler, agonising over the departed, there is a suggestion of life's wounds at work here. Dahl devoted the book to his daughter Olivia, whose death at seven from measles encephalitis left him tortured over his inability to save her. Mathison, who died of cancer in 2015, may also have approached the script with mortality in mind.

The tender bond between Sophie and the BFG seems to glow with protective yearning in this context. The scene in which Sophie leaps from her window, trusting the BFG to catch her, recalls earlier Spielberg leaps of faith – such as *E.T.*'s bike-flights, or the scene in which Sam Neill begs the boy to jump from the fence in *Jurassic Park*. Yet it's also a gorgeous grace note in its own right; and Spielberg's faith in Rylance's crinkly smile of assurance makes it all the more graceful.

The Buckingham Palace comedy routines are equally well-judged. As the Queen (a brisk, warm Penelope Wilton) and her retinue's blazing saddles ripen the air with "whizzpoppers", Spielberg trumps any fears that he's looking backwards and shows signs of evolution in the least likely of places: imagine how badly he might have laboured the flatulent farce in *1941*.

If Dahl's nasty streak is downplayed, that's simply an index of how lovingly Spielberg protects the film's core from its noisier eruptions. *The BFG* does not hit the game-changing heights of *E.T.* and *Close Encounters*, but it stands proud among them as a warm dream blown into the ears of the non-cynical. Its gentle touch is a loving anomaly among louder films. And if the cool US reception put you off, think of the box-office concerns as mere "puddlenuts" and take a leap of faith. ***Kevin Harley***

'RYLANCE DESERVES EVERY SUPERLATIVE, BRINGING THE BFG DOWN TO INTIMATE SIZE'



Yates and Holtzmann didn't hold back when the Twitter troll manifested...

the new paranormal

THE LADIES HAVE THE LAST LAUGH...

GHOSTBUSTERS *12*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

OUT NOW Digital HD **21 NOVEMBER** DVD, BD, 3D BD, 4K **EXTRAS** Extended edition (BD), Commentaries, Featurettes, Deleted/alternative scenes (BD), Gag reel (BD)

The year's most controversial blockbuster or its most interesting reboot? While *Star Wars* revisits a galaxy far, far, away, and Marvel and DC insist on joining every super-dot, Paul Feig brings something progressive to Hollywood franchises. For all its callbacks to its '80s vintage, here's a film confident to let fresh faces be the heroes.

And did we mention they're not men? 'Busters first and women second, Melissa McCarthy, Kristen Wiig, Leslie Jones and Kate McKinnon are smart, capable and – especially McKinnon's weird, wired Holtzmann – very funny.

If Feig and co-writer Katie Dippold play safe replicating the original's narrative beats, it only highlights how little this resembles Ivan Reitman's take. That was shot and structured as an adventure with laughs, while this is foremost a comedy. The looser the film is, the funnier it gets, letting the cast – including a revelatory Chris Hemsworth as dimwit secretary Kevin – put the ghosts of 1984 to rest.

There's even more to enjoy on a loaded disc. A c(h)atty Feig/Dippold commentary baits the online trolls while half an hour of alternative takes serve up a smorgasbord of non-sequiturs. The extended edition, meanwhile, introduces a boyfriend for Wiig, the return of "don't cross the streams" and even an explanation for why the ghosts are so mad. "They're mostly dudes." Figures. ***Simon Kinnear***



STAR TREK BEYOND *12*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT NOW Digital HD **21 NOVEMBER** DVD, BD, 3D BD, 4K **EXTRAS** Deleted Scenes (BD), Featurettes, Gag reel (BD), Music video

Three movies into its reboot, *Star Trek* has become old-fashioned again. Giving up on trying to be *Star Wars*, the original space opera finally feels comfortable in its own skin. Director Justin Lin delivers a decent baddie (Idris Elba), breathless set-pieces and a rollicking good adventure that feels straight off the telly box. *These* are the voyages of the Enterprise, long may they continue. Extras include affectionate tributes to Leonard Nimoy and Anton Yelchin. ***Paul Bradshaw***



THE NEON DEMON *18*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Featurettes, Image gallery

Ever since the immersive audio-visual tapestry of *Drive*, Nicolas Winding Refn has been serving up diminishing returns. *TND* is no different – a self-indulgent mood piece that looks (literally) bloody gorgeous but is as vapid as its characters. Centring on green teen Jesse (Elle Fanning) as she climbs the LA modelling ladder, Refn uses a sledgehammer to make his one point: that youth and beauty is murderously prided above all else in a shallow world. Stunning – Natasha Braier's cinematography and Clint Martinez's score are pristine – but emotionally sterile. ***Jane Crowther***

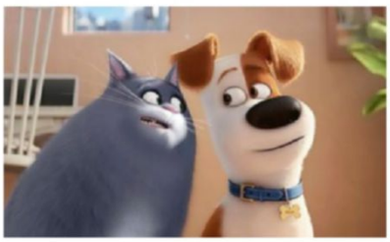


TALES OF HALLOWEEN *18*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Deleted scenes, Video diaries, Featurettes, Galleries

Featuring 10 loosely connected tales, this old-school horror anthology serves up serial killers, ghouls, monsters, evil kids and more. The standard rarely soars but doesn't plummet either, with each macabre mini-movie doing just enough to keep the project's blood circulating, if not viewers' hearts racing. Still, Neil Marshall's 'Bad Seed' section is a hoot, employing rubbery animatronics to bring a man-eating GMO pumpkin to glorious life. ***Jamie Graham***



THE SECRET LIFE OF PETS *U*

FILM ★★☆☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD, 3D, Digital HD
EXTRAS Featurettes, Short films

One of the box-office successes of the year ($850m worldwide), *Pets* has an easy sell – who hasn't wondered about their critter's private behaviour? But beyond the extremely entertaining vignettes that bookend the film, the concept is squandered on a derivative plot: it's basically *Dog Story*, as jealous pooch Max (Louis C.K.) ends up lost on the streets of NYC with his owner's new adoptee. The chases will entertain kids but there's less for adults. Too few of the characters make an impact and it feels like it'd be better served as a series of shorts. ***Matt Maytum***



ELVIS & NIXON *15*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★☆☆☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** None

Liza Johnson's film transforms a historical footnote – the iconic, improbable 1970 meeting between pop star and President – into a likeable, if lightweight, shaggy-dog tale. Michael Shannon captures the complex, late-career Elvis Presley, jaded in stardom and yearning for political clout. Kevin Spacey makes for an uncanny, cantankerous Richard Nixon. Their oddball chemistry is a delight, but it's frustrating how easily Johnson settles for whimsy when the material offers such a surreal, subversive slant on its electrifying era. Pitched as pop-culture cosplay caper, it struggles to justify feature length. ***Simon Kinnear***



JASON BOURNE *12*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT 21 NOVEMBER Digital HD
28 NOVEMBER BD, DVD, 4K
EXTRAS Featurettes

Nine years after *The Bourne Ultimatum* ended things so perfectly (and four years after 'parallel-quel' *The Bourne Legacy* saw Jeremy Renner fall on his ass), Matt Damon's amnesiac agent is back. He's put through his paces with typical aplomb by Paul Greengrass, whose high-velocity vérité fuelled *Supremacy* and *Ultimatum*, but no amount of charging through Athens, Rome, Berlin, London and Las Vegas can quite disguise there's no real reason to come back. Better than a lot of action movies but weaker than the original trilogy. ***Jamie Graham***



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE *15*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD
EXTRAS Commentary, Gag reel, Dance-off, Line-o-rama

Kevin Hart may be the fast-talking funnyman on fine form, but he's still no match for Dwayne Johnson being a big goofy doofus in this stupidly funny action-comedy. The Rock plays CIA force-of-nature Bob Stone, boasting a body of pure muscle and the fragile mind of his once fat, bullied former self. Framed while on a mission, Bob enlists the help of his old homecoming king, Calvin (Hart), who's now in a rut. Johnson steals every scene. ***Matt Looker***



THE LAST KING *15*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★☆☆☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, VOD **EXTRAS** None

In 13th Century Norway, evil plots are afoot. King Håkon is poisoned by his step-mother at the instigation of her lover, who then usurps the throne, while Håkon's infant son is spirited away by his mother and a few loyal warriors. A scheming bishop, in league with the Danes, sends his minions in pursuit. Cue heroically defiant speeches, multiple chase scenes on skis (or horseback), battles galore and huge expanses of snow-covered pine trees. It's all a bit Nordic *Game Of Thrones*, but Nils Gaup (*Pathfinder*) directs with brio, and the action sequences are vividly staged. ***Philip Kemp***



CHEVALIER *15*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★☆☆☆☆

OUT NOW DVD, BD, Digital HD
EXTRAS None

Flatpack assembly skills, cleaning prowess and cholesterol levels. These are just some of the tests the six men aboard an Aegean fishing trip must score well in to be named 'Best in General', having bored of bickering over angling abilities. Winner of Best Film at the 2015 London Film Festival, the third movie from Greek director Athina Rachel Tsangari dryly rips into the male ego's desperation to secure alpha status. Often painfully straight-faced, but with two genuinely laugh-out-loud scenes, it's an on-the-mark anti-buddy movie. ***Andrew Westbrook***

the round-up

Scrat, Kevin Smith and The Sound Of Music...



There's a meteor heading for Earth in *Ice Age: Collision Course* (★★, out 5 December, DVD/BD) and it's all thanks to Scrat – the only reason to watch the latest chapter of this tired franchise.

Also back are the heroes in half-shells; *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out Of The Shadows* (★★★, out now, DVD, BD) won't satisfy nostalgic fans, is fine for moppets.

Even Daniel Radcliffe can't work his magic on *Now You See Me 2* (★★, out now, DVD, BD), which lacks the fun of the first and piles on the nonsensical twists.



The 'real story' behind *The Sound Of Music* is darker than the sanitised musical allows, as shown by true-life drama *The Von Trapp Family: A Life Of Music* (★★★, out now, DVD).

Three women must defend their home in *The Keeping Room* (★★★ out now, DVD, BD), a slow but absorbing western.

Anthology horror *Holidays* (★★★, out now, DVD/BD) comprises eight shorts from little-known helmers (plus Kevin Smith). Most are derivative, daft or distasteful.



RETURN OF THE J.J.

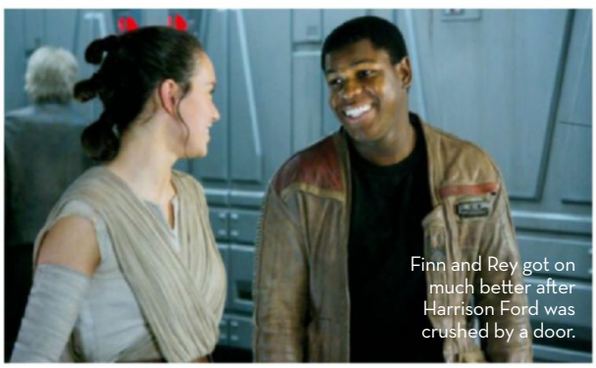
FIVE THINGS WE LEARNED FROM EPISODE VII'S RE-AWAKENING...



STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS COLLECTOR'S EDITION *12*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★½

OUT NOW 3D BD **EXTRAS** Commentary, Documentary, Featurettes, Deleted scenes



Finn and Rey got on much better after Harrison Ford was crushed by a door.



New featurettes explore the world of creature creation.

1 IT'S LIKE A NEW HOPE FOR A REASON

A common criticism of *The Force Awakens* is its similarity to *A New Hope*. J.J. Abrams addresses this head on in the (excellent) audio commentary. "We wanted to take the familiar and twist it," he says, while later discussing the "thrill of history repeating itself" in regards to the trench run-like attack on Starkiller Base. Abrams also considered locations such as Maz's cantina-like castle "prerequisite elements" for a *Star Wars* film, similar to a saloon in a western.

2 HARRISON FORD BREAKING HIS LEG WAS A GOOD THING

Not for Harrison Ford, of course. Or the production company, which was fined £1.6 million. But it gave Abrams time to realign the faltering relationship between Rey and Finn. In the original script, the pair were far more antagonistic after Finn revealed he was a runaway stormtrooper on Jakku. Several shot scenes were scrapped, and Abrams added excitement and warmth into their dynamic during three weeks of rewrites.

3 J.J. HAD A LOT OF HELP

Just like George Lucas and the movie brats, Abrams sought advice from friends, filmmakers and family. John Lasseter told him to increase BB-8's physical comedy, leading directly to the thumbs-up gag; Ava DuVernay suggested the hero shot of Rey swinging her lightsaber overhead at Kylo Ren; the trees being cut down around Rey and Ren as they fight was Steven Spielberg's idea; and Abrams' son Henry designed the new Resistance helmets.

4 BB-8 ORIGINALLY SPOKE ENGLISH

The five new featurettes, though short (totalling just under 40 minutes), are full of fascinating factoids. Most intriguing is a clip of actor Ben Schwartz reading one of BB-8's lines in English. It, er, isn't that exciting. "Thank you. What do you mean goodbye? I have to stay here, I can't leave!" Other BB-8 facts: the sound of him rolling around is a disco ball; Ben Burtt and Gary Rydstrom created the sound of BB-8's motors.

5 WE STILL HAVEN'T SEEN ALL THE DELETED SCENES

The two minutes and seven seconds worth of new deleted scenes are interesting but all too brief, offering a glimpse of Maisie Richardson-Seller's Korr Sella; a fun confrontation between Rey, Unkar Plutt and Chewie; and more of Harrison Ford's comedic brilliance as Han Solo. But this last deleted moment seems to end mid-scene – and where is Maz Kanata handing Luke's lightsaber to Leia? Don't be surprised if it isn't the last we've seen of *The Force Awakens* on shiny disc... ***Jordan Farley***



SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.TOTALFILM.COM/SUBS



DARK WATER *15*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

2002 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

EXTRAS Making Of, Interviews

In the midst of a fraught custody battle, a single mum (Hitomi Kuroki) and her six-year-old daughter (Rio Kanno) encounter spooky goings-on in their dilapidated block of flats, from which a small girl has gone missing. Big on atmosphere, sound and set design, Hideo Nakata's traditionally minded ghost story leaks an overwhelming sense of sadness from every frame. Less celebrated than the director's *Ringu* it may be, but it's every bit as compelling, and was remade in Hollywood starring Jennifer Connelly. Extras include interviews with Nakata and writer Koji Suzuki. ***Ali Catterall***



ODDS AGAINST TOMORROW *12*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1959 **OUT NOW** Dual Format

EXTRAS Introduction, Interviews, Booklet

Directed by the workmanlike Robert Wise (*The Sound Of Music*), *Odds* is a brooding, hard-bitten thriller bringing together a cracking cast: Robert Ryan, Harry Belafonte, Ed Begley, Shelley Winters, Gloria Grahame. Ryan, here at his craggy best, is the hardened ex-con providing the muscle in a crew planning a bank heist. Right from the start we're left in little doubt that it's an enterprise doomed to disaster, not least for the racial tensions threatening to rip the gang apart. It's all backed by a great moody jazz score by John Lewis of the Modern Jazz Quartet. ***Philip Kemp***



DAY FOR NIGHT *12*

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1973 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Documentary, Featurettes, Essay

François Truffaut's glorious tribute to the collaborative joys of filmmaking continues to enchant. The French auteur casts himself as a director shooting a romantic melodrama in Nice: among the myriad problems are the inability of the lead actress (Valeria Cortese) to remember her lines, a cat that won't drink milk on cue and the death of one of the actors before filming's been completed. Extras on this Criterion UK Blu-ray include a lucid explanation by academic Dudley Andrew of how the film prompted an irreversible rift between Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard. ***Tom Dawson***



THE BLUE DAHLIA *PG*

FILM ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

1946 **OUT NOW** BD

EXTRAS Introduction, Selected scene commentary, Radio version

Scripted by Raymond Chandler, *Dahlia* has naval war hero Alan Ladd coming home to find his faithless wife partying it up. So when she's murdered, he's naturally prime suspect. This being a Ladd film, Veronica Lake's on hand to console him, and William Bendix is memorable as his unstable buddy. The plot's as twisty as you'd expect, and if the ending doesn't quite hang together, blame the US Navy, who vetoed the original choice of killer. George Marshall's direction needs a touch more noir. ***Philip Kemp***



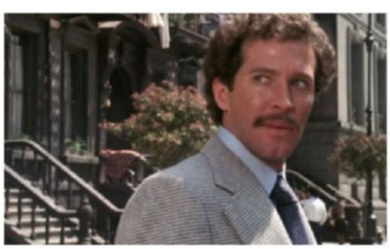
LABYRINTH *U*

FILM ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

1986 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD

EXTRAS Commentary, PiP, Featurettes, Q&A, Making Of

Fur-ball fans disappointed by 2009's BD reissue of Jim Henson's cult-ish fantasy should gobble up this 30th revisit. The restoration looks lovely and the extras include a David Bowie tribute, with Jennifer Connelly on hand to reflect on her turn as a teenager who has 13 hours to solve the labyrinth. Even as the plot gets lost, the muppet menagerie and Connelly's smarts sustain interest. But it's Bowie who steals the show: crafting the Goblin King as a vain rocker, he maxed the self-parody winningly. ***Kevin Harley***



DR. STRANGE *U*

FILM ★★☆☆☆ EXTRAS ★☆☆☆☆

1978 **OUT NOW** DVD

EXTRAS None

As you might've guessed, this 1978 TV movie is worlds apart from the Benedict Cumberbatch blockbuster. This Stephen Strange (Peter Hooten) is a lothario doctor discovered by an old wizard mentor and slowly convinced of his mystical abilities (no broken hands and intensive training here). He then travels to different astral planes via disco lights and a synth soundtrack to battle with evil foe Morgan LeFay (Jessica Walter). Sadly, what could have been a fun watch succumbs to low production values, terrible dubbing and '70s psychedelia. ***Matt Looker***

the round-up

Blackmail, burnings and fur bikinis...



Don Chaffey's dino-sauce classic *One Million Years B.C.* (★★★★, 1966, out now, Dual Format) is best remembered for its Raquel-Welch-in-a-fur-bikini poster, but the real wow factor comes from Ray Harryhausen's stop-motion creatures.

Summer-camp horror *The Burning* (★★★★, 1981, out now, BD) is both so-so cinema and a superb slasher. Features a capable cast of young gonna-bes (including Holly Hunter and Fisher Stevens) and a scene of still-extraordinary carnage.

Drifter Paul Newman blows into a small Mississippi township and falls into a love-hate relationship with Joanne Woodward in *The Long, Hot Summer* (★★★, 1958, out now, DVD). Add in Angela Lansbury and Orson Welles in a fake nose and the entertainment factor's high.



Roy Scheider is the LA businessman being blackmailed by porn-industry lowlifes in *52 Pick-Up* (★★★, 1986, out now, Dual Format). John Glover all but steals the movie as a slickly charming mastermind with a disconcertingly arty approach to his criminal activities.

TOTAL FILM XMAS GIFT GUIDE

COMPILED BY JOSH WINNING



super store

From Cap to Bats to Wonders, 2016 has been the year of the superhero (again!). We can't offer you unbreakable shields or (full-size) Batmobiles, but here's the next best thing(s), heading up our guide to the finest, movie-iest gift ideas available this Yuletide...

THE HULK MINI BUST

RRP £85.49 **365 GAMES**

He was sorely missed in *Captain America: Civil War*, so while you wait for Hulk to bust back into the MCU in *Thor: Ragnarok*, give him pride of place in your living room by grabbing one of these hand-painted polystone collectibles based on Mark Ruffalo's version of the big green fella. Towering at 10.5 inches, he's quite a beast – but that's exactly how we like our Hulk. Bongo drums not included.

BUILD YOUR OWN BATMOBILE

RRP £6.99 **IWOOT**

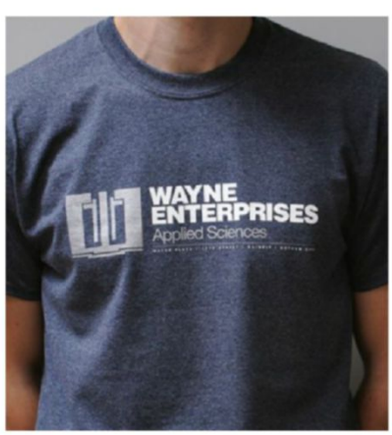
Weave together eight puzzle sheets to create your very own, 26cm-long caped cruiser.





DEADPOOL GAME OF THRONES T-SHIRT

RRP £13.99 **ETSY**



WAYNE ENTERPRISES T-SHIRT

RRP £20 **LAST EXIT TO NOWHERE**

SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.TOTALFILM.COM/SUBS



BATMAN ONESIE
RRP £22.99 IWOOT



DEADPOOL CHAIN WALLET
RRP £14.99 IWOOT

Put your money where the Merc's mouth is with this Wade Wilson-styled black wallet, which comes with a detachable (non-weaponised) chain just in case.



CAPTAIN AMERICA CHRISTMAS JUMPER
RRP £36.99 MERCHOID



DEADPOOL JUMPER
RRP £36.99 MERCHOID



WONDER WOMAN 3.5-INCH FIGURE
RRP £19.99 IWOOT

She's finally getting her own movie next year, and though this Q-Fig Figure isn't based on Gal Gadot's Wonder Woman, we're loving the classic aesthetic as the Amazonian princess launches into battle wearing her bulletproof bracelets and Lasso Of Truth. And yes, that's her currently visible invisible plane.



ANT-MAN 10-INCH BLEACHER CREATURE
RRP £17.99 IWOOT

From little-heard-of hero to gigantic star, Ant-Man was the clear winner of the Avengers' tarmac rumble in *Captain America: Civil War*, and now you can own a cute, squishy version of the little fella.

side kicks

Here's a few utility belters...



MINI FRAMED LEGO SUPERHEROES
RRP £6 EACH
ETSY
Who says that size matters?



SPIDER-MAN ART PRINT
RRP £15 **ETSY**
Excelsior! etc.



WOLVERINE CUFFLINKS
RRP £11.78
ETSY
Not made from adamantium.



JUSTICE LEAGUE TINS
RRP £12.99 (SET OF FOUR)
IWOOT
This just tin...

wars chest

There's nothing rogue about any of this merch...



THE ART OF ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

RRP £17 **AMAZON**

We've been dazzled by the trailers (Darth! Mads! Bazooka!) and this whopping coffee-table tome looks set to dazzle anew with over 250 pages of glossy imagery from the first *Star Wars* prequel we've been excited about since, well, 1999.



BB-8 CHRISTMAS JUMPER

RRP £39.99 **MERCHOID**

'Tis the season to be adorable, and you'll have everybody "ooohing" and "aaahing" between mouthfuls of turkey if you model this droid-themed jumper. And don't worry, it's available in unisex sizes, so you can be cute, no matter your gender/species/droid number of choice.



ROGUE ONE BIG FIGS

RRP £19.95 EACH **TESCO**

Play out your own *Star Wars* stories with these 20-inchers – the larger than life range includes Jyn Erso, K-2SO, Death Trooper and Stormtrooper.



LEGO STAR WARS 75155 REBEL U-WING FIGHTER BUILDING SET

RRP £64.99 **AMAZON**

Can't wait for *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*? Get in the mood with this epic Lego set, which boasts enough nifty bits and bobs (a plastic fantastic 659 pieces in all) to make any jawa squeal. Equipped with four big engines, a range of blasters (and back-up ammo), an opening mini-figure cockpit (with transparent observation window) plus a range of shooters (pull-out, spring-loaded), it's a battle-ready dream – and even includes the film's already-iconic Bistan.

alliance extras

Rogue wonders...



STAR WARS BAUBLES
RRP £19.99
MERCHOID
These are the ornaments your cat's looking for.



STAR WARS BOOKENDS SET
RRP £24.99
IWOOT
You can lean on them.



STAR WARS PIZZA CUTTER
RRP £15.90
AMAZON
Handy for chopping up Christmas roasties. And pizza.



DEATH STAR KITCHEN TIMER
RRP £15.99
AMAZON
May explode when it goes off. (Note: it doesn't.)



CROCHET KIT
RRP £19.99
FIREBOX
Tell a good yarn.



STAR WARS FILM POSTER COASTERS

RRP £6.99 (SET OF FOUR) **IWOOT**

We find your lack of coffee-table protection disturbing.



I HAVE YOU NOW STAR WARS T-SHIRT

RRP £20 **LAST EXIT TO NOWHERE**

Re-enact the final moments of *A New Hope*. All you need is a friend dressed as Darth Vader and a Death Star replica. Done.



STAR WARS MONOPOLY – THE FORCE AWAKENS EDITION

RRP £29.99 **FIREBOX**

Embrace your inner Sith Lord with this snazzy board game, which demands you pick a side – Empire or Rebel Alliance – as you fight for dominance over a galaxy far, far away. Just make sure you're first to the board; expect squabbles over who gets to play as Kylo Ren.



game plan

The state of play for Christmas...



ASSASSIN'S CREED: THE EZIO COLLECTION

OUT NOW RRP FROM £32 | PS4, XBOX ONE

The ideal preparation for the upcoming Michael Fassbender movie, this compendium tells the story of the series' most charismatic assassin, Ezio Auditore da Firenze. Taking us from late 15th Century Florence to Ottoman-era Constantinople, the trilogy has been smartly spruced up for current hardware. Ezio's second outing, *Brotherhood*, is the standout, but his is a journey worth experiencing in its entirety.

PLAYSTATION 4 PRO

OUT NOW RRP FROM £349

If you've recently splashed out on a giant TV and you still have money burning a hole in your wallet, Sony has just the console for you. Designed to make the most of 4K displays, the Pro uses HDR tech for superior colour definition and has double the processing power of the bog-standard PS4 – so whether you're playing videogames or streaming films, they'll look better than ever before.



FINAL FANTASY XV

OUT 29 NOVEMBER

RRP FROM £45 | PS4, XBOX ONE

Heralded by lavish CGI feature *Kingsglaive*, this could be the most ambitious production ever to come from a Japanese studio. Ignoring genre traditions to assume the form of a fantastical road movie, *FFXV* takes place within a vast open world. Its four heroes might look like boy band rejects, but they team up to devastating effect in the dynamic battle sequences.

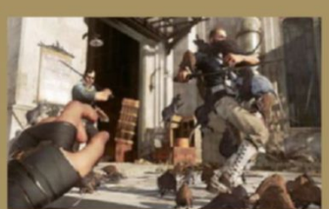


THE LAST GUARDIAN

OUT 9 DECEMBER

RRP FROM £44 | PS4

After nine years in development, the latest from the team behind the gorgeously melancholic *Ico* is finally finished. It tells the story of a boy attempting to tame and befriend a recalcitrant (but adorable) griffin-like creature as the pair work together to escape captivity. If its origins on old hardware are evident, the beast's animation inspires genuine wonder.



DISHONORED 2

OUT NOW RRP FROM £40 | PC, PS4, XBOX ONE

Brutal chaos? Patient stealth? Bit of both? *Dishonored 2*'s steampunk world gives you plenty of room to experiment, with its two assassin leads boasting a range of supernatural powers. A clockwork mansion is an early highlight, marrying violence, spectacle and freeform design. Plus, with Rosario Dawson and Sam Rockwell among the voice cast, it sounds as good as it looks.

thrones sweet thrones

Enough riches to fill seven kingdoms...



KING'S LANDING 3D PUZZLE

RRP £29.99 **FORBIDDEN PLANET**

We're in for a looooong wait for Season 7 of *Game Of Thrones*, so you'll have a bit of time on your hands in the coming months. Kill it deader than a White Walker with this 260-piece 3D puzzle of the Seven Kingdoms capital, constructed entirely out of paper. It's almost as complicated as one of George R.R. Martin's plots, but that's part of the appeal, right?



JON SNOW POP! VINYL

RRP £8.99 **FORBIDDEN PLANET**

We're not sure if this is pre- or post-stabby Jon Snow, but the sombre expression on the poor guy's face hints at the latter. Cheer him up by placing him on the POP! Vinyl Iron Throne. It's where he belongs after all.



FOUR SHOT GLASSES

RRP £10.99 **FORBIDDEN PLANET**

Line 'em up and knock 'em back in true Tyrion fashion while pledging allegiance to each of the four houses.



HAND OF THE KING WAX SEAL MINI KIT

RRP £8.99 **AMAZON**

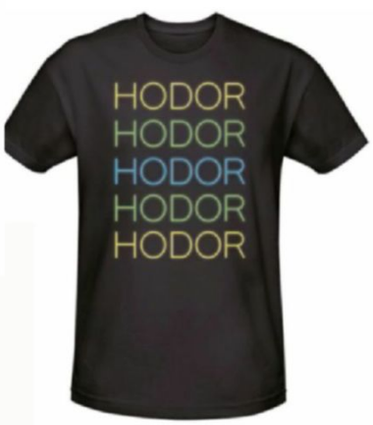
Letter writing may be a lost art, but you'll want to revive it when you get your paws on this olde worlde kit – it includes a wax stick, parchment, envelopes, plus a Hand Of The King seal, to make sure everybody knows how important you are.



GAME OF THRONES DORBZ

RRP £9.99 EACH **HBO SHOP**

If you're sad that everybody in the show always looks so miserable, this new set from the makers of POP! Vinyl should slap a smile on your face – they've managed to turn Daenerys' frown upside down, anyway.



HODOR T-SHIRT

RRP £17.99 **HBO SHOP**

Still mourning Hodor's heroic bow? Dry your eyes with this t-shirt, which pays fitting tribute to the burliest of burly men – or just wear it and show the world you'll never forget. If only repeating his name five times would bring him back...



MESSENGER BAG

RRP £29.99 **FORBIDDEN PLANET**

Big enough that you could fit a baby dragon in it – or roughly two and a half of George R.R. Martin's back-breaking books. There's also a front zip compartment for keeping all of those secret communications from King's Landing. Or your keys.

finding stories

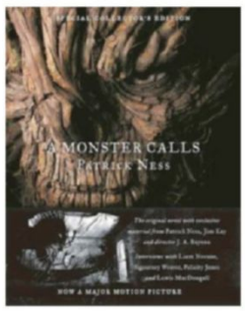
Gifts that have a way with words...



THE GIRL WITH THE LOWER BACK TATTOO

RRP £7.99 **OUT NOW**

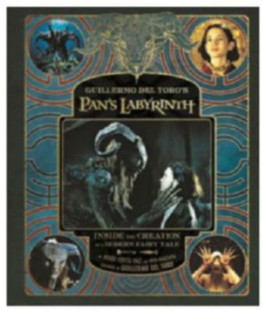
Plain talking, as ever, from Amy Schumer – this confessional autobiography tells the "riches to rags" story of her childhood before getting into the gory details of her career, family and (yes) sex.



A MONSTER CALLS: SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

RRP £13.48 **OUT NOW**

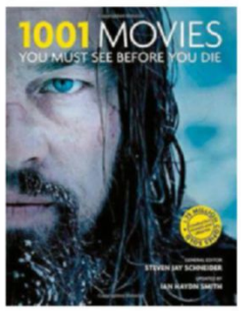
Because your old copy of Patrick Ness' heartbreaking YA fable has probably been ruined by your tears, this new special edition is just the ticket, complete with Jim Kay's beautiful artwork.



GUILLERMO DEL TORO'S PAN'S LABYRINTH

RRP £28.78 **OUT NOW**

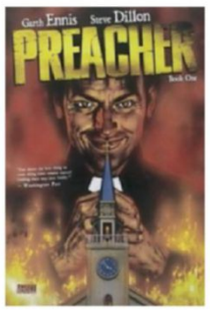
On the 10th anniversary of the Mexican auteur's definitive dark fantasy, this glossy tome delves into its making of, with concept art aplenty plus exclusive access to del Toro's journals and sketches.



1001 MOVIES TO SEE BEFORE YOU DIE

RRP £10 **OUT NOW**

In case your shelf isn't quite full enough of *Total Film* back issues, this classy, compelling annual gets a 2016 refresh to include new classics such as *The Revenant* and *Mad Max: Fury Road*.



PREACHER: BOOK 1

RRP £12.59 **OUT NOW**

You've seen the light with the Dominic Cooper-starring AMC show, now go back to the beginning of Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon's batshit graphic novel with this collection of the first 12 issues depicting the antics of Jesse Custer.

wall flowers

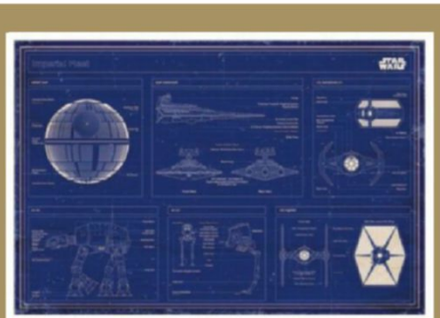
Pitch-perfect prints and posters.

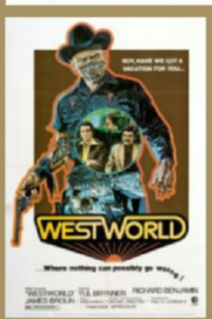
HARLEY QUINN WATERCOLOUR

RRP £7.70 **ETSY**

★ Not content with stealing the show in *Suicide Squad*, she's now turning her hand to nabbing the spotlight in your living room. This eye-catching print of a handmade watercolour depicting DC supervillain Harley Quinn captures the crazy one's spirit perfectly – sassy and with generous flourishes of anarchic colour. Just don't let the Joker know your mates are ogling his girlfriend during footie night.









IMPERIAL FLEET BLUEPRINT

RRP £3.99 **ALLPOSTERS**

The ultimate in intergalactic DIY.

DC COMICS MAXI POSTER

RRP £5.99 **IWOOT**

A collage of cool.

WESTWORLD POSTER

RRP £11.19 **ALLPOSTERS**

Like androids, a classic never dies.

ready to wear

Attack of the clothes...

FILM MUST HAVE ★★★★★



BLACK PHILLIP T-SHIRT

RRP £20 **LAST EXIT TO NOWHERE**

The cast of *The Witch* were fantastic, but the breakout star was obviously Black Phillip, the sinister goat who may or may not be in league with the Devil. Wear this and scare all of your friends into doing your bidding.



DADDY'S LITTLE MONSTER JUMPER

RRP £36.99 **MERCHOID**

Baseball bat not included.



STAR WARS SOCKS

RRP £14.99 **KITBOX**

What every Jedi has under their robes.

STAY PUFT XMAS SWEATSHIRT

£28 **DARK BUNNY TEES**

You'll be as toasty as... well, a roasted marshmallow.





STRANGER THINGS T-SHIRT

RRP £20.03 **RED BUBBLE**

So cool it's spooky.



FACEHUGGER TEE

RRP £20 **LAST EXIT TO NOWHERE**

A different kind of chestburster.

hitting home

Make your house proud with these essentials...



STAY PUFT GHOSTBUSTERS CANDLE
RRP £20.99
BFI SHOP
Smells like fresh marshmallows (no, really).



MARVEL CUSHIONS
RRP £12 **ETSY**
Cushions assemble!



GHOSTBUSTERS PLAYING CARDS
RRP £14.99
FIREBOX
Sadly no Holtzmann in this pack.



MARVEL COMICS ACTION PANEL DUVET SET
RRP £27.99
ZAVVI
Sleep in style.



FILM MUST HAVE ★★★★★

on track

Sound choices for movie-music lovers...

ROGUE ONE: A STAR WARS STORY

OUT 16 DECEMBER RRP £13.99

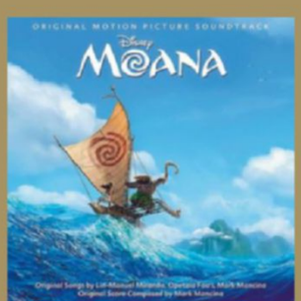
★ After his *Force Awakens* stormtrooper cameo, long-held reputation as "the new John Williams" and trip to *Jurassic World*, Michael Giacchino fulfils his destiny with his *Star Wars* debut. (No Bothans died in the process, though Alexandre Desplat dropped out.) Going by Giacchino's previous scores, expectations include epic sweep, grand emotion and fabulously, gratuitously silly track-titles. 'Rebel Without The Force', maybe?



MORRICONE 60

OUT NOW RRP £9.99

With the *Hateful Eight* Oscar, the tour and signing to Decca, Ennio Morricone has rocked 2016 hard. Hence his celebration of 60 years in scoring: 23 tracks, most re-recorded with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. Ushered between symphonies of the harrowed harmonica, operatic chorales and ecstatic melodies, this is a grand sweep through the career of a man who's shaped film music's DNA.



MOANA

OUT 18 NOVEMBER RRP £10.18

For parents whose kids won't stop playing 'Let It Go', help may be at hand. For its animated December release, Disney is pushing the music upfront; not for nothing was *Moana*'s exuberant teaser dropped during the Tony Awards. With Tony-winner Lin-Manuel Miranda (*Hamilton*), Pacific music man Opetaia Foa'i and composer Mark Mancina (*Planes*) taking the credits, *Frozen*'s hold may slip yet.



FANTASTIC BEASTS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

OUT 18 NOVEMBER RRP £11.48

The *Harry Potter* scores developed lives of their own outside Hogwarts' walls, so the pressure's on composer James Newton Howard to keep the potion bubbling. Combining 'Hedwig's Theme' with a thrusting spirit of fresh adventure, his 'Main Titles' theme certainly bodes well. If you're entranced, the owls bring more good news: the double-CD deluxe edition is a 100-minute whopper. Lumos Maxima!



THE LAST WALTZ: 40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITIONS

OUT NOW RRP FROM £13.89

Martin Scorsese's genre-defining document of roots-rockers The Band's farewell gig gets its birthday due in four gift-sized re-release packages. The 54-track, 4-CD, double-disc Blu-ray collector's edition is the one to plump for if you're feeling flusher than a cocaine cowboy after a little 'refreshment'. Other options include a vinyl set, a four-CD/one BD deluxe edition and a 2-CD (cheapskate!) option.



rich pickings

For those feeling flush...



ELECTRIC DELOREAN DMCEV

RRP £70,000 FIREBOX

The price tag will have you exclaiming "Great Scott!" but for those lucky Lottery winners and/or trust-funders, this is a seriously wow-some collector's item. Created by the DeLorean Motor Company in association with Epic EV, it's an electricity-powered beauty that, alright, doesn't come with a flux capacitor, but it does have everything else you'd want from a timeless classic on wheels.



CRYSTAL HEAD VODKA

RRP £49.99 FIREBOX

There's a chance we'd have enjoyed Indiana Jones' fourth outing more if we'd been served this quadruple-distilled delicacy beforehand. Not official Indy merch, it's actually designed by *Ghostbusters* alum Dan Aykroyd, which means double geek points.



CINEMA LIGHT BOX

RRP £29.99 FIREBOX

Your living room already looks like a cinema with its huge TV, Blu-ray bookcases and movie posters, so why not add a cinema-esque light box? This one comes with 69 flexible acetate letters, numbers and symbols. Rude movie quotes ahoy!



BLADE RUNNER WHISKY GLASSES

RRP £99.95 (FOR A PAIR) FIREBOX

The fact Denis Villeneuve is directing sequel *Blade Runner 2049* is something to raise a glass to, and what better way than with a tumbler based on the gorgeous square whisky receptacle used by Deckard in the original?

SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.TOTALFILM.COM/SUBS



REY 11-INCH FIGURE

RRP £249.99 IWOOT

She was missing from more than a few toyline releases when *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* blasted onto screens a year ago, so it's fitting that Rey's now got her own gorgeous figurine from Sideshow Collectibles and Hot Toys. Just don't try to hold her hand.



STAR WARS FORCE BAND

RRP £69.99 AMAZON

Battle-worn and emblazoned with the Rebel insignia, you'll feel like a genuine Jedi with this nifty gadget. Equipped with *Star Wars* sound effects, plus lights and vibrating effects, you can even use it to control your Sphero BB-8 by using Jedi-esque hand gestures.



STAR TREK BLUETOOTH COMMUNICATOR

RRP £119.95 FIREBOX

Sure, we have mobile phones now, but they're not half as nifty as this replica *Star Trek* handset, based on the design of the Original Series communicator. It comes with its own foam-lined case to keep it in mint condition, and you can make calls using the bluetooth connectivity.

bargain hunt

Stocking thrillers that don't cost the Earth...



007 TOP TRUMPS

RRP £4.99

IWOOT

A different kind of 'Trump', thank goodness.



RON BURGUNDY PHONE CASE

RRP £4.99

IWOOT

Kind of a big deal.



LITTLEFINGER BUTTON BADGE

RRP £4.99

FORBIDDEN PLANET

We're sure Petyr Baelish approves.



STRANGER THINGS KEYRING

RRP £7.99

THE FOWNDRY

Because nothing says '80s more than 'retro keyring'.

first among prequels

THE BATTLE FOR SAUL'S SOUL CONTINUES...

BETTER CALL SAUL: SEASON 2 *15*

SHOW ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Commentaries, Featurettes, Gag reel

If *Breaking Bad* made for slow-build TV, then spin-off *Better Call Saul* exhibits all of the propulsion of a wounded snail. But while this second season occasionally tests patience – not least because it resets much of Jimmy's Season 1 moral growth – then know that every shot is perfectly framed and the characters, already complex, only deepen as they inch along.

Picking up soon after S1 concluded, James Morgan 'Jimmy' McGill (Bob Odenkirk) seems to have given up his dream of going straight, and is back to pulling cons. Until, that is, he wants to win over former co-worker Kim (Rhea Seahorn) and thus takes a job with Sante Fe law firm Davis & Main. Only Jimmy's life path is far from cemented, and Mike (Jonathan Banks) – the hitman who is Jimmy's partner-in-crime in *Breaking Bad* – seems intent on steering him back off track.

While there's a certain amount of circling here as creator Vince Gilligan realises he has a show that can run and run (Season 3 is already shooting), the character work is deeply satisfying. Jimmy's older brother Chuck (Michael McKean), especially, would steal the show if Odenkirk wasn't so damn mesmerising, and Mike's battle of wills with Hector Salamanca (he of the dinging bell in *Breaking Bad*) is a thing of chokingly suspenseful beauty. Sit back and luxuriate. ***Jamie Graham***



Better leave a message, Saul's in a meeting.



PREACHER: SEASON 1 *18*

SHOW ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Deleted/extended scenes, Featurettes, Gag reel (BD)

Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon's riotous comics get a tonally faithful adap from Evan Goldberg and Seth Rogen, with Dominic Cooper compelling as Jesse Custer, the preacher who can force people to do his bidding. After a stunning pilot that fully captures the comics' gleeful violence, the quality dips and soars, but the sun-scorched lensing is a treat and Ruth Negga rocks as Tulip. ***Jamie Graham***



BLINDSPOT: SEASON 1 *15*

SHOW ★★★☆☆ EXTRAS ★★★★☆

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Pilot commentary, Deleted scenes, Featurettes, Gag reel

An intriguing central mystery covers up what is otherwise familiar cop procedural territory in this glossy, action-centric US drama. Jamie Alexander stars as Jane Doe, a woman abandoned in Times Square with no memory, but plenty of tattoos, each of which is linked to a crime. Sadly, as the series develops and Jane regains more of her memory, the show itself becomes more and more forgettable. ***Matt Looker***



LUCIFER: SEASON 1 *15*

SHOW ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★☆☆☆

2015-16 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Deleted scenes, Comic-Con panel, Featurettes

The big-screen adap of Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* may have stalled, but its key players can already be seen in *Lucifer*, in which the prince of darkness helps a cop solve crimes in LA. It's hardly faithful to Gaiman, but it is great fun, with dialogue boasting Whedon-level wit. Tom Ellis is career-best brilliant as the devil incarnate who's part Ryan Gosling in *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, part Kenneth Williams. Hot stuff. ***Jordan Farley***



THE FALL: SERIES 3 *18*

SHOW ★★★★☆ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆

2016 **OUT NOW** DVD, BD, Digital HD **EXTRAS** Featurette, Deleted scenes

It was risky for *The Fall*'s creator Allan Cubitt to bring back his superior Belfast crime thriller. After all, Jamie Dornan's killer Paul Spector was last seen dying in the arms of Gillian Anderson's cop Stella Gibson. But if you're willing to overlook the miraculous survival, this six-parter gamely spins the show in a new direction, with Cubitt's precision pacing, plus Dornan and Anderson's expert turns, keeping you hooked. Sublime. ***James Mottram***

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WIN! INDEPENDENCE DAY: RESURGENCE PROPS, BD AND A TV!

Twenty years on from Roland Emmerich's 1996 epic, the aliens strike back in *Independence Day: Resurgence*, the all-action sequel to one of the biggest films of all time. Director Emmerich returns to marshal the destruction once more, joined by Jeff Goldblum (as brilliant boffin David Levinson), Liam Hemsworth, Jessie T. Usher, Maika Monroe, Bill Pullman and Brent Spiner.

Heaving with special features, *Independence Day: Resurgence* is out now on Digital HD, Blu-ray, 3D Blu-ray, 4K Ultra HD and DVD. To celebrate, we've teamed up with Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment to offer a money-can't-buy prize: props from the movie! You could own David Levinson's very own bag plus an ESD (Earth Space Defense) military press badge and black tablet. One winner will receive all this plus a 32-inch Full HD LED Samsung Smart TV and a copy of *Independence Day: Resurgence* on Blu-ray. Ten runners-up will win a copy of the film. For a chance to win, answer the following question…

WHICH OF THESE FILMS DID ROLAND EMMERICH *NOT* DIRECT?

A OLYMPUS HAS FALLEN
B STARGATE
C 10,000 BC

TO ENTER ONLINE GO TO HTTP://BIT.LY/TF253COMP

TERMS & CONDITIONS You can enter this competition at any time between 18 November and 21 December by entering online at http://bit.ly/TF253COMP. By taking part in the competition you agree to the competition rules, which are summarised below but can be viewed in full at www.futureplc.com/competition-rules. By entering you confirm you are happy to receive details of future offers and promotions from Future Publishing Ltd and carefully selected third parties. If you do not want to receive information relating to future offers and promotions, follow the instructions online. Competition helpline number 01225 442244. Late or incomplete entries will be disqualified. Entries must be submitted by an individual (not via any agency or similar) and, unless otherwise stated, are limited to one per household. The company reserves the right in its sole discretion to substitute any prize with cash or a prize of comparable value. Unless otherwise stated, the competition is open to all GB residents of 18 years and over, except employees of Future Publishing (including freelancers) and any party involved in the competition or their households. By entering a competition you give permission to use your name, likeness and personal information in connection with the competition and for promotional purposes. If you are a winner, you may have to provide additional information. Details of winners will be available on request within three months of the closing date. If you are a winner, receipt by you of any prize is conditional upon you complying with (among other things) the competition rules. You acknowledge and agree that neither the company nor any associated third parties shall have any liability to you in connection with your use and/or possession of your prize.



BLACK MIRROR: SEASON 3 *15*

STREAMING

2016 **AVAILABLE NOW** | NETFLIX

Charlie Brooker's anthology series of future-tech nightmares swaps Channel 4 for Netflix and ups its game accordingly, widening its scope to encompass tales set in the States while enlisting an impressive line-up of big-name directors (Joe Wright, James Watkins, Dan *10 Cloverfield Lane* Trachtenberg). It's also more ambitious in genre terms, squeezing in a lesbian romance, a race-against-time thriller and a haunted-house horror yarn within five hour-long instalments and a 90-minute mini-movie.

The latter, 'Hated In The Nation' (★★★★), is the most conventional. Kelly Macdonald's detective conjures a *Prime Suspect* vibe as she pursues an entity that offs hate figures targeted by a malign hashtag. Murder also features in 'Shut Up And Dance' (★★★★), a "Simon Says" pulse-quickener that casts *The Imitation Game*'s Alex Lawther as a teen obliged to obey the orders of a mystery text messager if he wants his online proclivities to stay secret.

DARK REFLECTION Kelly Macdonald (on the right) tracks a hashtag killer in 'Hated In The Nation'.

Less successful are 'Playtest' (★★★) and 'Men Against Fire' (★★), both of which have young guinea pigs seeing things that do not exist while trialling a videogame and policing a warzone respectively. Yet they're balanced out by 'Nosedive' (★★★★), a pastel-coloured fantasy set in a world where social media ratings decide one's social standing, and the touching 'San Junipero' (★★★★), in which Gugu Mbatha-Raw and *The Martian*'s Mackenzie Davis realise death needn't bring an end to their burgeoning relationship. On this evidence, it's no surprise Jodie Foster has signed up to direct in Season 4. ***Neil Smith***



WESTWORLD *15*

★★★★☆

8 DEC | AMAZON

Saddled up again in HBO's remake, Michael Crichton's tale merits revisiting in its 1973 form. As cow-bots get kill-crazy at a theme park, Crichton mixes high tension with slyly clever nods to cinematic illusion. Yul Brynner's relentless stride still chills.



ESCAPE TO VICTORY *PG*

★★★☆☆

17 DEC | AMAZON

A jolly old time is had at war in John Huston's dozily enjoyable footie spin on *The Great Escape*. Michael Caine and Max von Sydow bring the acting skills, Pelé dribbles like a pro, and Sylvester Stallone gurns for dear life in goal.



ENDER'S GAME *12*

★★★☆☆

10 DEC | NETFLIX

As Asa Butterfield trains to kick alien rump, big themes propel Gavin Hood's almost-there adap of Orson Scott Card's novel. Should kids go to war? Should Harrison Ford be so grumpy? And best of all: WTF's up with Ben Kingsley's accent?



ANOMALISA *15*

★★★★☆

11 DEC | NETFLIX

For the use of Cyndi Lauper covers in film, Charlie Kaufman's stop-mo beauty kicks *Trolls*' butt. David Thewlis' motivational speaker falls for Jennifer Jason Leigh's sales rep, prompting deep life truths, tender puppet sex and song. *Pingu* it is not.



BONE TOMAHAWK *18*

★★★★☆

12 DEC | NETFLIX

It seems like *The Searchers*-lite at first, but S. Craig Zahler's horror-western has surprises in store. A peak-form cast spout meaty dialogue through manly beards, before Zahler tomahawks all niceties in the bowel-splintering final act.



MIDNIGHT SPECIAL *12*

★★★★☆

9 DEC | SKY

If *Stranger Things* stoked '80s nostalgia, try Jeff Nichols' Spielberg/*Starman* sci-fi hybrid. As a father takes his glowy-eyed son on the run, Nichols proves that CGI and Michael Shannon can still amaze when subtly unleashed.



HAIL, CAESAR! *12*

★★★★☆

11 DEC| SKY

The Coens' Valentine to studio cinema delights after darker recent work. Does it mean much? Who knows, but the cast are a blast and it's stolen by Alden Ehrenreich, auguring great things for a man soon to run off with the Falcon.

EDITED BY JANE CROWTHER



TOTAL FILM BUFF

CINEMA CELEBRATED AND DEBATED. BOOSTING YOUR MOVIE GENIUS TO SUPERHERO LEVELS...


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this issue

GIVE THE GUY A BREAK...
SH... SH... SH... SHAAARK!
SYRUP OF FIGS
KING OF THE SWINGERS
HOLD THE DOOR!
ETHAN'S HUNT
TOTALLY IN THE JS!
BOTTOMS UP
JUST THE TICKET?

INVESTIGATION

IS IT BOLLOCKS?

Film Buff investigates the facts behind outlandish movie plots.

THIS MONTH **FRACTURING A SPECIFIC BONE IN THE ARM IN THE NICE GUYS.**



Q Russell Crowe uses literal strong-arm tactics on Ryan Gosling, snapping his arm then suggesting he tell his doctor he's got "a spiral fracture of the left radius". Can you crack specific bones?

A **DR. ARASH AFRAMIAN**, TRAUMA ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON, AND **PROFESSOR JUSTIN COBB** , CHAIR IN ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY, ORTHOPAEDIC RESEARCH UK

Theoretically it is possible to fracture the arm with a rotational movement, but it's usually preceded by shoulder dislocation, as seen with ancient torture (Strappado) because the shoulder is an inherently unstable joint to allow the huge range of motion. It would also more likely be the upper arm (humerus) that fractures. The manoeuvre in the film doesn't appear to apply a rotation specifically to the forearm that is allegedly broken, but rather to the upper arm. The forearm can be considered a 'ring' structure – if one part breaks, there should be another break in the forearm ring (either another bone or the wrist or the elbow). It's likely the two-part injury would require a larger cast than the one March gets, one that goes above the elbow. The type of cast he's wearing is only temporary and designed to allow swelling. It isn't waterproof and wouldn't fare well in the swimming pool at the party! And fractures hurt. The likelihood of being able to fight, shoot and jump, as March does, would be reduced by the inevitable pain.

VERDICT KINDA BOLLOCKS

ALTERNATIVE BOX OFFICE

THE BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTER MOVIES... WITH **EDIBLE TITLES**



1	Ratatouille (2007)	$620.7M
2	Twister (1996)	$494.5M
3	Charlie And The Chocolate Factory (2005)	$475M
4	Grease (1978)	$395M
5	Chicken Little (2005)	$314.4M
6	Salt (2010)	$293.5M
7	American Pie 2 (2001)	$287.6M
8	Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs 2 (2013)	$274.3M
9	The Silence Of The Lambs (1991)	$272.7M
10	Bean (1997)	$251.2M

ON LOCATION

REEL SPOTS BEHIND THE CAMERA



WHAT? Amity Island is in full tourist season when a girl spots a fin sliding from the sea to the pond where Chief Brody's son is sailing. "Sh-sh-shaaark!" she wails, prompting Brody (Roy Scheider) to race to the rescue.
WHERE? Joseph Sylvia State Beach and American Legion Memorial Bridge, Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.
GO? The bridge crossing the estuary to Sengekontacket Pond looks the same, but you're not allowed to jump off it like Brody did. Not that that stops people doing it, or shouting "Shark!" from the beach. ***Thanks to Ryan Marsh-Mcleod***

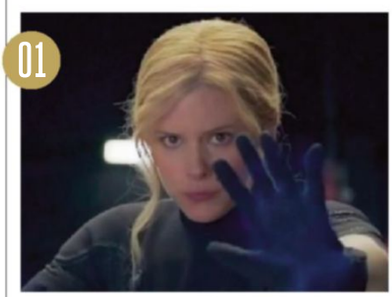
Snapped yourself at a film location? Send us the details at totalfilm@futurenet.com

TOP 10

RESHOOT WIGS

Hairdos for re-dos

01



FANTASTIC FOUR

Kate Mara's painfully obvious reshoot wig provides a handy 'spot the new scene!' reference point for all the changes made to Josh Trank's critically annihilated comic adap. Mara had already dyed her hair back to brunette, so had to don a full hairpiece for *FF*'s reshoots.

02



PRETTY IN PINK

When test audiences poo-pooed John Hughes' ending (Andie ends up with Duckie), a new finale was created – but Andrew McCarthy had shaved his head for a play. "If they knew we'd still be talking about it 25 years later, they'd have paid for a better wig," he jokes.

SW: ATTACK OF THE CLONES

Ewan McGregor doubled down with a wig *and* fake beard for reshoots on George Lucas' second prequel. McGregor (who had shaved his bonce for *Black Hawk Down*) is visibly uncomfortable in his scratchy two-piece. A real Jedi-sore.

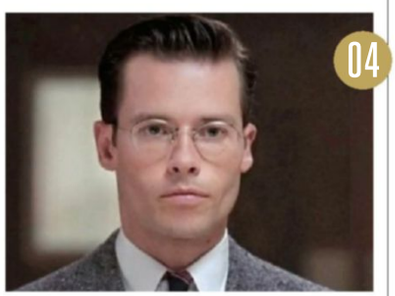
03



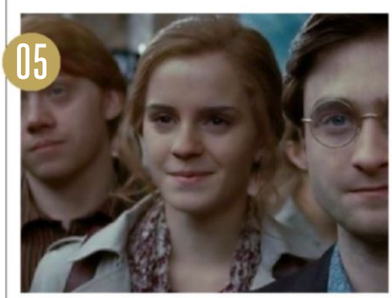
LA CONFIDENTIAL

Guy Pearce slipped into a "very expensive wig" when called back by director Curtis Hanson to reshoot his fight with Russell Crowe – luckily the wig (Pearce had since shaved his head) matched his old do perfectly. Proof it's worth splashing the cash on fake follicles.

04



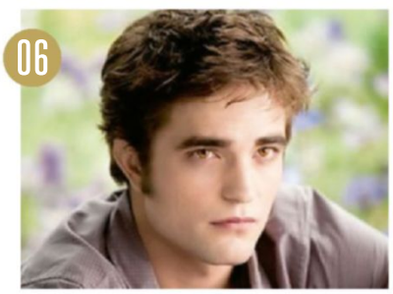
05



HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS: PART 2

"I needed a change," Emma Watson said of going full pixie after wrapping *HP*. But it was premature; she was handed a 'middle-aged' wig to redo the final flash-forward scene.

06



THE TWILIGHT SAGA: BREAKING DAWN – PART 2

Perhaps the scariest thing in the glitter-vamp franchise was Robert Pattinson's reshoot wig on the final Twiflick, which he referred to as a "Frankenstein's monster" – it was cobbled together from six hair-pieces.

LEGALLY BLONDE

Both Reese Witherspoon and Luke Wilson needed a little help in the hair department when they were called back to film Elle's graduation scene, which wasn't in the original script (they'd started *The Importance Of Being Earnest* and *The Royal Tenenbaums* respectively).

07



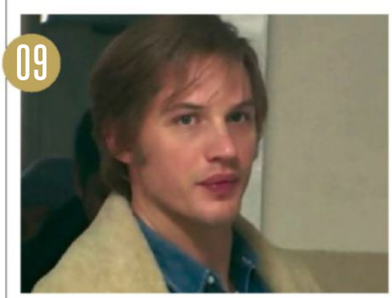
THOR: THE DARK WORLD

Not just fake hair, but fake Natalie Portman. When she couldn't return for a smoochy scene, a solution came via Chris Hemsworth. "They put his wife in my wig and costume," says Portman. "That's why it was so passionate." Thor blimey.

08



09



TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY

Tom Hardy's original period wig – modelled on, of all things, Paul Hogan's Crocodile Dundee coiffure – was so shocking (he called it "a ferret") that it was replaced in reshoots with a less conspicuous hair-piece.

10



KILLERS

Katherine Heigl found herself on the wrong side of a bad bouffant when she spent two days reshooting this duff actioner with Ashton Kutcher. Heigl had returned to her dark roots, and the glaringly obvious syrup she donned was as awful as the film. *JW*

TOTAL FILM'S CONFESSIONS

DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS OF THE TF TEAM.

THIS MONTH... UNWRITTEN RULES OF LOCATION SET VISITS.

Wear shoes suitable for standing for hours and wading through mud.
Remove head-sets as soon a cut is called. It's rude to continue listening to mic-ed actors chatting.
Bring a waterproof but not a brolly.
Stay out of actors' eyelines. Appear actively disinterested during a take.
Phones off, not on silent. Even that gentle vibration can be picked up.
Partake in tactical weeing. Don't be the fool peeing behind a hedge when the star wanders over.

HINDSIGHT CORNER!

Stars eat their words...



Christoph Waltz
SPECTRE (2015)

DECEMBER 2014: "It feels really good and that's what I was hoping for when I said, yeah, please, if you ask me I'd love to do it."

SEPTEMBER 2016: "I cannot claim that I've really nailed Blofeld. Overall, it held water and was OK. But it wasn't what I've been looking for. I was searching for more inspiration."

PLAIN TALKING

Learn the movie lingo

THIS MONTH: BACKLIGHTING

The technique of directing the light towards the camera from behind the subject or subjects of the scene. This causes the people or objects in the foreground to appear in semi-darkness or in silhouette. For a famous example, see the shower scene of Hitchcock's *Psycho*, with the knife-wielding killer appearing backlit to hide 'her' true identity.



REX. ILLUSTRATION BY GLEN BROGAN

CAREER INJECTION

TARZAN

After his latest bungle in the jungle, can the king of the apes rediscover his swing?

Even in a year thick with ill-reasoned reboots, *The Legend Of Tarzan* left viewers and (probably) gorillas lost in the mist over its intent. True, *Harry Potter* helmer David Yates' riff on Edgar Rice Burroughs' ape-man swung higher than some at the box office, chest-beating *Ghostbusters* and *Ben-Hur* with a $356m haul. But that isn't a franchise-banking figure, and the middling reviews largely concurred on one thing: *Legend*'s most developed aspect was Alexander Skarsgård's pec-deck.

Outside Skarsgård's lead and Margot Robbie's Jane, this was a Tarzan without a distinct voice. The shadow of *SPECTRE* loomed, unavoidably, over Christoph Waltz's otherwise enjoyable villain. As for Tarzan's scars, we don't need another haunted hero after the *Dark Knight* trilogy. And compared to the spectacularly realised critters in 2016's *The Jungle Book*, Yates's CG beasts looked less than fantastic.

But perhaps *Legend*'s biggest misfires were symptoms of a more complex problem: nailing the tricky Tarzan tone. Make it too daft and you're just monkeying about; make it sombre and vintage Tarzan movie beefcake Johnny Weissmuller would be rolling in his grave. Yates' film swings clumsily between adventure and edu-tainment, without ever properly addressing the risks of racism inherent in a story about a white posho lauding it over Africans.

All of which raises a sticky question: why bother? Tarzan has made regular screen returns since silent movies, but his last few appearances haven't worn well. Disney's *Tarzan* (1999) fell short of *The Lion King*. As for *Tarzan And The Lost City* (1998), even Casper Van Dien wasn't its corniest note. Hugh Hudson's *Greystoke: The Legend Of Tarzan, Lord Of The Apes* (1984) was more respectable, but it didn't half bang on about it at a fun-starved 143 minutes. Even the title outstayed its welcome.

Yates' film isn't as deathly, but it struggles to cut a path through the chafing tones and racial implications. If Adam Cozad and Craig Brewer's script takes only tender steps towards exploring the horrors of colonialism, it spends even less time giving the jungle's inhabitants a voice. Samuel L. Jackson is great, but he's used like a get-out-of-jail-free card. Tarzan's writers need to grasp the vine of racial complexities more smartly and boldly. Tarzan films need to have fun: but first, they need to earn the right. *KH*

FIVE POINT FIX

1. Give the racial issues full consideration first. Otherwise, any Tarzan film will seem hopelessly naïve.
2. Pass the title to Disney. The Mouse House is looking sharp with the live-action reboots.
3. Crank up the pace. Sombre heroes? Got plenty, thanks. A Tarzan film needs to be an old-school pulse-racer.
4. Give Jane more fun. Robbie is fine, but *Legend*'s rescue plot made *Jurassic World*'s heel-gate look progressive.
5. Fix the CGI. Maybe *The Jungle Book* spoiled us, but even chimps would face-palm at *Legend*'s FX.



An understated Harvey Keitel in *Mean Streets*.

IS IT JUST ME...

OR ARE THE BEST PERFORMANCES THE UNSHOWY ONES?

asks Philip Kemp

Alex Ross Perry's searing psychological drama, *Queen Of Earth*, got plenty of appreciative reviews when released a few months ago. One critic even described it as *Repulsion* remade by Ingmar Bergman.

But as far as the acting was concerned, most of the plaudits went to Elizabeth Moss as Catherine, the troubled young woman driven close to total breakdown after her adored father has died and her boyfriend has dumped her. Moss, weeping, raving and debasing herself in the urgency of her emotional need, certainly acted up a storm.

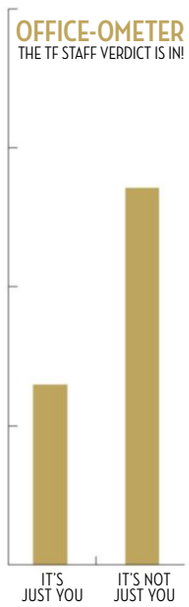
For me, however, the standout performance was actually Katherine Waterston as her friend Virginia, watching Catherine fall apart with a mixture of pity, bemusement and more than a touch of schadenfreude.

It's Waterston who, I reckon, holds the film together, allowing Moss to dig into the messy depths of hysteria without fracturing the narrative flow. And it's far from the first time this has happened. With Scorsese's *Mean Streets*, Robert De Niro's screen career took off as the dangerously out-of-control Johnny Boy; it took his co-star, Harvey Keitel, quite a while longer to establish himself. Yet it's Keitel's far less showy performance as the conflicted Charlie that provides the bedrock on which De Niro can cavort.

Or again, take the peerless Ealing black comedy *Kind Hearts And Coronets* (1949). Alec Guinness's eight-fold role as the entire D'Ascoyne clan predictably picked up the accolades; and yes, it's a tour de force. But what dominates the film is the cool, urbane voice-over narration of serial killer Dennis Price, suavely murdering his way to the dukedom.

King of the minimalist actors was Robert Mitchum. Check out the scene in *Cape Fear* (the 1962 original, not the Scorsese remake) where Gregory Peck, whom Mitchum's hassling, gets his friend the sheriff (Martin Balsam) to lock him up. A fast-talking Southern lawyer (Jack Kruschen) shows up to get his client sprung. All four sit round a table. Peck talks, Balsam talks, Kruschen talks a lot. Mitchum says not a word, doesn't move a muscle, barely shifts his eyes. And he steals the entire scene. Now that's acting. Or is it just me?

Share your reaction at www.gamesradar.com/totalfilm or on Facebook and Twitter.



LAST MONTH SHOULD WE STOP USING 'FANFICTION' AS A PUTDOWN?

SAMANTHA JOHNSON
Yeah, I've read some fantastic fanfic and seen some really shitty movies.

JONATHAN WHITE
Let's start using the term 'capepunk': superhero films based in reality.

PIYA MAYHEW
I always felt that – like much of 'geek' culture – those that look down on it don't have much experience of it.

S#
'Fan fiction' should never be used as a put-down, ever. It's all about quality. There are some incredibly well executed fan films and stories out there (some even manage to trump their officially licensed counterparts). Writing is hard, hard work and props to any fan (paid by Marvel et al or otherwise) that can pull off a captivating story.

AARON HUGHES
It's just you.







THE BIG SHOT

THE DUKE'S DOORWAY IN THE SEARCHERS

In 1955, rambunctious Western titan John Ford was feeling stung after an ugly spat with his leading man Henry Fonda on *Mister Roberts* and wanted to prove himself on his next picture. He chose *The Searchers*, a screenplay by long-time collaborator, Frank Nugent, based on the book by Alan Le May. Ostensibly the tale of a former Confederate soldier who spends years scouring the Texan desert for his Comanche-kidnapped niece, Debbie, Ford declared that this cowboy flick wouldn't be a mere matinee oater, but "a psychological epic".

Casting his regular leading man, John Wayne, as the war-damaged, racist and vengeful Ethan Edwards, while putting cinematography in the hands of Winton C. Hoch, a man he called pedantic but knew would capture the vistas he needed, Ford began work on what would become his masterpiece. Unflinching in its look at racism, miscegenation, and the war crimes of the American Cavalry in 19th Century Texas, *The Searchers* showcased Ford's control of light, angles, nature and body language (he cut pages of dialogue in favour of action), creating, with Hoch, indelible moments much-homaged since. David Lean watched *The Searchers* repeatedly while prepping for *Lawrence Of Arabia*. Spielberg nodded to it in *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*. Directors from Scorsese to Godard name it as one of their inspirations.

No scene more perfectly captured the themes of the film, nor Hoch-Ford's cantankerous double-act genius, than the final moment when Wayne's exhausted Ethan returns to the homestead with his niece Debbie (Natalie Wood) having rescued her from a Comanche camp. Mirroring the film's opening scene, we watch from inside the cosy, soothing darkness of the house, through the doorway to the searing, white-hot heat of the desert (Monument Valley standing in for Texas) as Ethan carries Debbie to the porch and her mother's literal apron strings.

As the reunited and joyful family bustle indoors, Ethan is silhouetted in the doorway, hesitating, seemingly physically pained by the realisation that he does not belong in this scene. Turning slowly, the ultimate outdoors man and perennial wanderer shambles down the steps and back out into the desert, turning his back on domesticity in favour of the wilderness as a haunting cowboy song lilts: "Ride away, ride away…"

Hoch was a Technicolor lab expert who had risen to the ranks of cinematographer, and was master at filming in darkness and finding the contrast in the sun-bleached vistas that Ford adored. Shot in VistaVision – a higher resolution, widescreen variant of 35mm – Hoch understood the impact of this shot, the comfort of the darkness stretching from each side of the screen and enveloping the audience, leaving Ethan and the desert in stark contrast, highlighting the divides explored throughout the film.

The doorway represents a metaphysical gap between man and nature, new Americans and Native Americans, domesticity and savagery, family and solitude. And Wayne's bittersweet performance makes this finale all the more poignant and emotionally devastating as the door swings shut, locking him out and us in, forever preserving both Ethan (and Wayne) in that moment and place in our cinematic conscience. *JC*


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INSTANT EXPERT

BILLY BOB THORNTON

Bad Santa, fine filmmaker...



Raised in an Arkansas shack with no plumbing, Thornton toiled away at the Hollywood coalface for years before hitting it big, but never forgot his roots. After receiving an Oscar for writing *Sling Blade* (1996), which he also directed and starred in (earning the first of his two Oscar noms for acting), he became the go-to guy for injecting backwater grit – see the likes of *U-Turn* (1997) and his other Oscar-nommed turn in *A Simple Plan* (1998).



On the advice of Billy Wilder, whom he once waited on, Thornton turned his attention to scriptwriting, co-scribing *One False Move* (1992) to ensure he got a decent role, while also expanding his range to include director and musician (four solo albums and counting). When Miramax hacked an hour from *All The Pretty Horses* (2000), he threatened to give up directing... but he hasn't yet – see *Jayne Mansfield's Car* (2012).







Thornton's mother, a Deep South psychic, was the inspiration for *The Gift* (2000), which he co-wrote with regular partner Tom Epperson. He's been married six times and has five children. Exes include Angelina Jolie. He and Jolie wore lockets containing a drop of each other's blood.



Not cut from the usual Hollywood cloth, Thornton is known for shunning celebrity culture. He also suffers from OCD and a phobia of antiques (as do his characters in both *Sling Blade* and *Bandits*, 2000), explaining, "I just don't like old stuff. I'm creeped out by it." Having repeatedly shone playing a variety of outsider roles, Thornton has joked that "casting directors call him up when they need an asshole".



Thornton gravitates toward those who see more than they say. Memorable characters unable or unwilling to speak their minds range from Karl in *Sling Blade*, to the all-but-mute Ed Crane in the Coen brothers' *The Man Who Wasn't There* (2000), to the downright malevolent Lorne Malvo in the first season of TV's *Fargo* (2014), for which he was nominated for a Primetime Emmy and won a Golden Globe. ***MG***

KEY MOVIES



SLING BLADE
1996 ★★★★☆
Hemming and hawing as if too shell-shocked by his own crimes to speak, Thornton's intellectually challenged ex-con Karl Childers proved a career-changer.



A SIMPLE PLAN
1998 ★★★★☆
As the moral centre of Sam Raimi's wintry thriller about a trio stumbling upon a fortune, Thornton is quietly heartbreaking, seeming to will on the storm that engulfs them all.



MONSTER'S BALL
2001 ★★★★☆
The doomed love affair between Thornton's Death Row jailer and inmate's wife Halle Berry crackles with electricity (and not just from the executioner's chair).



BAD SANTA
2003 ★★★★☆
Thornton's rancid dime-store Santa flaunts a flair for Sambuca-black comedy. It remains his biggest hit as leading man, taking $76.5 million at the global box office. The sequel opens 25 November.

ALLSTAR



CLASSIC SCENE

BILL & TED'S BOGUS JOURNEY

A matter of life, Death and Twister...



01

SADLER UP

Killed by robot duplicates, loveable dolts Bill and Ted battle Death for the right to live. *Die Hard 2*'s William Sadler auditioned hard for the Reaper role, arriving with Czech accent ready. Adding clogs to compensate for Sadler's shortness (5ft 8in), director Peter Hewitt encouraged the star's enthusiasm for improv.



02

FANTASTIC JOURNEY

In Death's expansive chambers, the games begin... Impressed by Hewitt's Gilliam-esque short *The Candy Show*, producer Scott Kroopf hand-picked the Brit to direct. While Stephen Herek's *Excellent Adventure* was cheap 'n' cheerful, Hewitt wanted "something more cinematic, but with the same feeble humour".



03

SEAL-ING THE DEAL

Alongside nods to *Star Trek* and Powell and Pressburger's *A Matter Of Life And Death*, the encounters with Death raise a Swedish arthouse spectre. Hewitt styled Death as a "Bergman-esque cartoon", evident from this meeting of strategy game Battleship with echoes of Ingmar's classic *The Seventh Seal*.



04

IN THE ROUND

Death returns from contemplating the Cluedo evidence, passing a large globe. With a $20m budget, Hewitt had *Blade Runner*'s effects man Richard Yuricich and art designer David L. Snyder rendering designs for the afterlife. The director created consistency by weaving in circular rhyming motifs: spheres, domes.



05

GREAT LEVELLERS

To stop the sets' scale from dwarfing Keanu Reeves and Alex Winter, Hewitt kept the duo's POVs central. Game-wise, Death is brought down to their lowbrow level with their choice of playing field. Chess? No way: Twister is the winning gambit. "We're fighting on our turf," quipped Reeves, "not his."



06

BOND OF BROTHERS

To axe-god Steve Vai's guitar-playing, Bill and Ted celebrate victory. The dude-speak didn't alienate Hewitt; the Brit feeling it was their harmony that mattered most. "They're classic clowns, like Laurel and Hardy," added Kloopf, "and they should go on having adventures until they're senior citizens." Threequel? ***KH***

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THE TF QUIZ

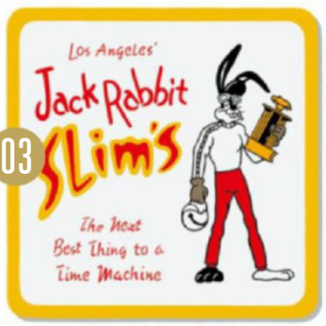
DRINKING GAME

Which films do these cinematic beer mats come from? Bottoms up...

Illustrations: Tom Ward

01


02


03


04


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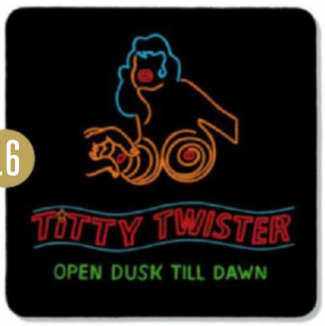

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16


ANSWERS 1) Cocktail 2) The Lord Of The Rings 3) Pulp Fiction 4) Bugsy Malone 5) Indiana Jones And The Temple Of Doom 6) Who Framed Roger Rabbit 7) Star Wars: A New Hope 8) Total Recall 9) Raiders Of The Lost Ark 10) Shaun Of The Dead 11) Back To The Future 12) Police Academy 13) The Terminator 14) Harry Potter franchise 15) Superman II 16) From Dusk Till Dawn

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60 Second Screenplay



SPOILER ALERT!

TF SAVES YOU A NIGHT OUT EVERY MONTH. THIS ISSUE: **WE DERAIL THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN...**

FADE IN:

INT: TRAIN CARRIAGE
DRUNK EMILY BLUNT has her face pressed up against the train window, each of her inebriated eyes looking at a different house.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Every day I take thish train and I see that blonde woman and wish I was her. I used to live nearby, y'know. Now that other blonde woman does. With my ex-hushband. Nah, nah… I'm alright, I'm alright. I want to kill her. Nah. What was I shaying?

INT: THERAPIST'S OFFICE — SIX MONTHS AGO
BLONDE WOMAN #1 stops masturbating long enough to tell SUSPICIOUS THERAPIST that she is bored of being a sex-obsessed housewife.

BLONDE WOMAN #1
I am so sick of my privileged suburban life and my husband doesn't understand me. Please shag me.

SUSPICIOUS THERAPIST
No, that would be wrong. But, by all means, suck my fingers.

She does, then goes home to have sex with her aggressive husband, SUSPICIOUS LUKE EVANS. Then she goes to BLONDE #2's house to quit her job as a nanny.

BLONDE WOMAN #2
But you can't quit! I hate MY privileged suburban life too! Oh well, at least I'm still in a loving marriage.

JUSTIN THEROUX
Hello, darling wife. I love you.

THE AUDIENCE
He did it.

INT: BEDROOM
DRUNK EMILY BLUNT wakes up covered in lots of blood.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Oh my gawwwwd! This is horrible! I feel sick! This is the worst hangover I've ever had! Oh look, blood.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT attends an AA meeting and her alcoholism immediately improves. The police arrive.

DETECTIVE ALLISON JANNEY
Exposition time. BLONDE WOMAN #1 is missing and you were seen near her house, which she shares with SUSPICIOUS LUKE EVANS. She was the nanny of your ex-husband JUSTIN THEROUX and his new wife BLONDE WOMAN #2, who you hate.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Well, when you put it like that, it shounds very complicated.

DETECTIVE ALLISON JANNEY
Luckily, the frequent flashbacks and the unreliable narrator mean that it's practically impossible to care about understanding any of it.

A flashback shows that BLONDE WOMAN #1 had a baby when she was 17, but the child drowned. Then another flashback shows DRUNK EMILY BLUNT attempting to steal JUSTIN THEROUX's new baby. Then BLONDE WOMAN #1's body is found in the woods. She was pregnant when she died.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Yikes, the *Girl On The Train* drinking game just got really dark.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT bumps into old acquaintance PHOEBE FROM FRIENDS who tells her she's not a violent drunk, just a sad one.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
So I'm actually the victim here, right? I mean, probably not quite as much as the woman who was murdered obviously, but still… poor me? But wait, hang on, that means JUSTIN THEROUX lied to me…

AUDIENCE
Yeah, he did it.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Woah, so do you think, possibly, he could have…?

AUDIENCE
YES.

DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
Oh my God. HE did it!

THE AUDIENCE rolls their eyes, DRUNK EMILY BLUNT confronts JUSTIN THEROUX and he confesses. They fight and she stabs him in the neck with a corkscrew, the alcoholic's weapon of choice. The next day she gets on a train.

RECOVERING DRUNK EMILY BLUNT
I'm not the girl I used to be. Look, I'm on the other side of the carriage now to prove it. Giving up alcohol really has changed my life.

THE AUDIENCE
Ugh. We need a drink.

FIN

NEXT ISSUE: DOCTOR STRANGE

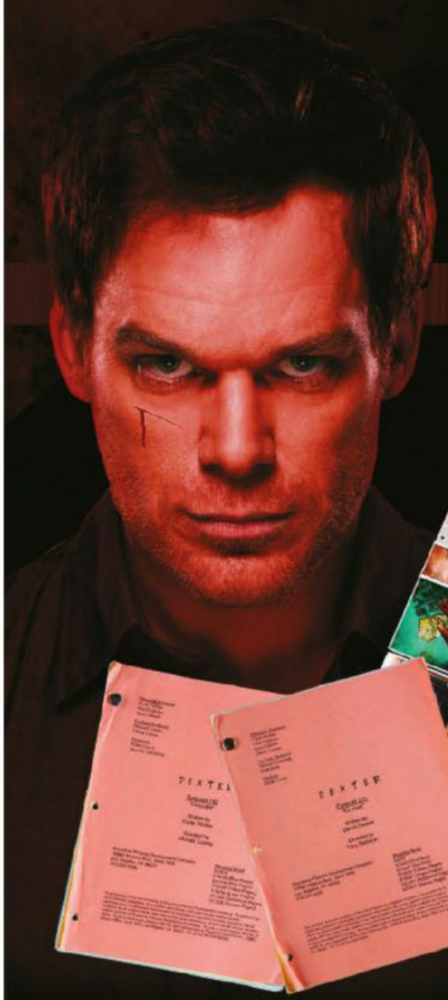
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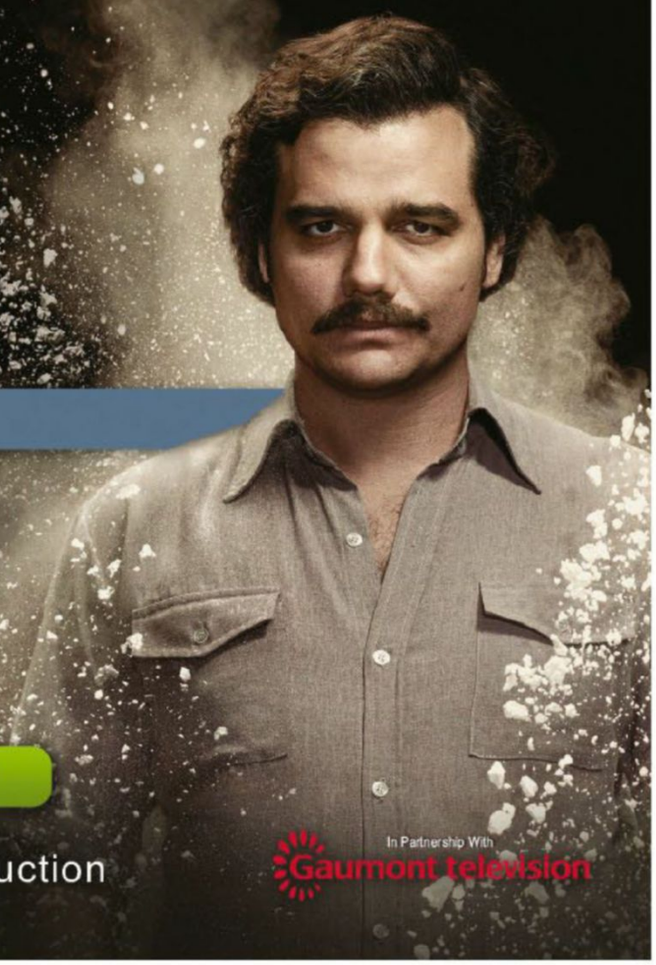


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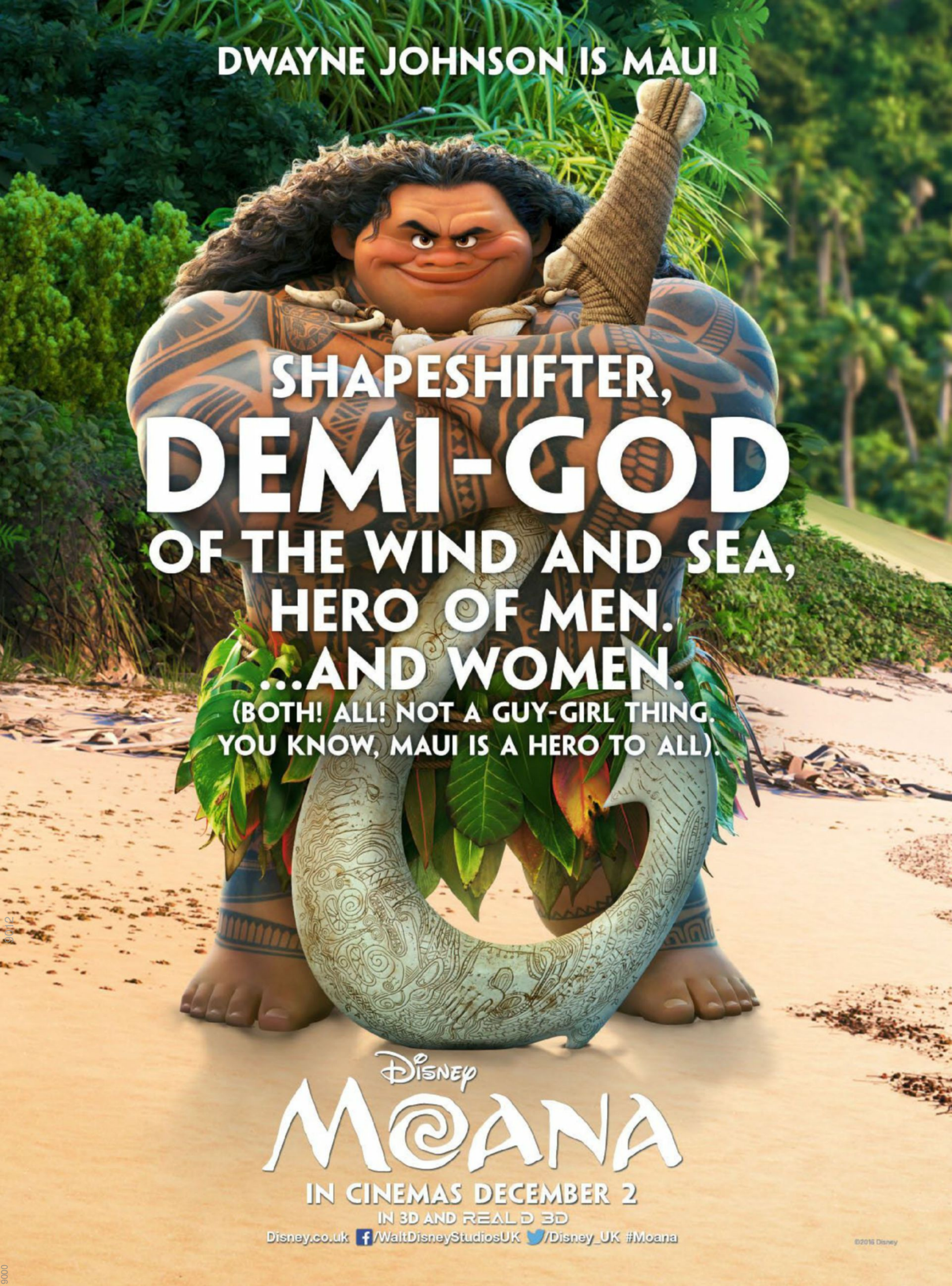
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